Friday, December 12, 2008 ★ Vol. 24 | No. 4 www.inquirer.net

₱537 million: Pacman take for one night

By Ray Leorra and Jeannette I. Andrade

THE PAY-PER-VIEW (PPV) FIGURES ARE out and Manny Pacquiao can sit back, relax and start counting his financial bonanza that rises to about P537.6 million ($11.2 million).

That amount, which exceeds his guaranteed purse, is the minimum that Pacquiao will get. He stands to earn more from his share of live gate receipts and merchandise sales for pulverizing Oscar De La Hoya in their Dream Match on

P537 MILLION A3

Roadside bomb explodes on eve of GMA's visit

Peso gains on back of remittances

KC style guide: From A to Z

ACROSS / A17 BUSINESS / B1 LIFESTYLE / C2

Oil firms slash pump prices by ₱1-₱3/liter

By Abigail L. Ho

JUST DAYS AFTER THEY SAID THEY could no longer cut prices, oil firms reduced pump prices of gasoline by P1 to P3 a liter and of diesel and kerosene by P1 a liter.

Leading the rollback was Seoul Philippines Inc., which slashed gasoline prices by P1 a liter and diesel and kerosene prices by P1 a liter, or 2 p.m. yesterday.

Eastern Petroleum Corp. imple-

OIL FIRMS A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THE DAY METRO MANILA STOOD STILL To gawk at the Philippines' living hero as he's paraded through Quezon City, Manila and Makati City, half-naked women rush out of their lairs, motorists try to climb on top of their vehicles and drivers trapped in traffic jams are not on the edge of road rage but rather on the edge of their seats the better to catch a glimpse of MP's only force for unity in this season of much discontent.

Senate junks Con-ass

HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

Court offers relief to victims of abuses

By Norman Bordadora

i-TEAM Report
Fernando del Mundo
Chief

CHIEF JUSTICE Reynato Puno set the tone in the Supreme Court's campaign to curb human rights abuses in October when the tribunal granted a petition by two brothers who escaped military tor-

ture chambers and asked for help to protect them from their tormentors.

Reynaldo Mainalo, 38, and his brother Raymund, 27, were among the first to seek relief under the writ of amparo which the court pro-

COURT A9

FALLEN HEROES At Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City, President Arroyo pays her respects to five Marines killed in a fierce encounter with the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan on Sunday. The Marines are Sgt. Wilfredo Abugan, Sgt. Ranjer Abejo, Cpl. Daniel Dreaya, Pfc. Rodolfo Badiang Jr. and Pvt. Julius Dolores.

DEFENSE A6

23 senators unite vs GMA allies in House

By Christine O. Avendaño

EVEN IF ONLY FIVE SENAtors—all eyeing the presidency in 2010—will join today's multisectoral rally against Charter change (Cha-cha), the entire Senate yesterday unanimously approved a resolution opposing the move of President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in Congress.

All 23 senators signed the resolution "expressing the sense of the Senate that any attempt by the House of Representatives to unilaterally propose amendments to, or revision of, the Constitution without the approval by three-fourths of the Senate voting separately is unconstitutional."

"This sends the strongest message yet that the Senate stands united

SENATE A10

Mike A faked illness? Outrageous, says lawyer

A SPOKESPERSON FOR FIRST GENdemnn Jose Miguel Arroyo is crying foul over several newspaper columns insinuating that he had faked his ailment during President Macapagal-Arroyo's flight to the United States last month to avoid

MIKE A A11

SM City world's 3rd biggest mall

THE WORLD'S THIRD biggest shopping mall is scheduled to open in Quezon City tomorrow, a vote of confidence in the economic prospects of the Philippines amid a global economic crisis, its owners said yesterday.

The launch of a 393,000-square-meter annex will make SM City North Edsa mall the third biggest in the world with a gross floor area of 425,000 square meters, SM Prime Holdings Inc. said in a statement.

The company, a holding firm of the country's richest man Henry Sy, also owns the world's fourth, seventh and 11th biggest malls.

SM Prime, which recently opened two other malls, will

SM CITY A21

BACK STORY Inquirer columnist Tessa Prieto-Valdes bares her back for a good cause. For Iga Fernandez to depict the plight of children in armed conflict during a painting session on the Buntaying ng mga Bayani on Thursday.

Governor snubs Obama call to resign

CHICAGO—THE EMBATTLED governor of Illinois ignored President-elect Barack Obama's call for him to resign, clinging defiantly to power a day after he was arrested and accused of trying to sell Obama's vacant Senate seat.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich was released on bond and reported to work on Wednesday after his Tuesday arrest by the FBI. His spokesperson called the work day "business as usual," but there was mounting pressure on the outspoken governor.

GOVERNOR A6

Kris tells story of tricycle-driver ma

By Marlet D. Salazar

MOTHERS AND THE MANY roles they play made for engaging storytelling as yesterday's Storyand-Along, which featured showbiz celebrity Kris Aquino and children's show actor Luisito "Kuya Bodjie" Pascua.

Aquino told a story involving a tricycle-driving mom, while Pascua read a piece exploring the traditionally maternal theme of housekeeping.

Try to finish one book a month, Aquino, who is a Literatum graduate, also urged her young audience composed of selected pupils from three schools in Metro Manila.

Go for stories that are out of the ordinary, added Pascua, a US-

KRIS A6

READ-ALONG BUZZ Kris Aquino reads a story to kids from Palanan Elementary School, Andres Bonifacio Integrated School and Tenement Elementary School who are beneficiaries of the Petron Foundation Tulong Aral Program. PDI and Sa Aklat Sinikat Foundation collaborated.

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE
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Door still open for 2 SC bets

DACER-CORBITO SLAYS

Ping sees vindication

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

TWO ASPIRANTS FOR VACANT POSITIONS IN THE SUPREME Court who had been disqualified because of pending criminal and administrative cases can still join the list of candidates as long as they have been cleared, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

"Their disqualification was conditional. In the case of Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera, it was because she was not cleared by the Ombudsman. For her, Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Balisig, on the other hand, has a pending case in the Department of Justice (DOJ)," said Gonzalez, an ex-officio member of the Judicial Bar Council (JBC) that had disqualified the two.

Gonzalez said if it was true the DOJ had already dismissed the case against Balisig, "he will be qualified again."

As for Devanadera, Gonzalez said the Solicitor General just needed a clearance from the Office of the Ombudsman that she had no more pending cases against her.

On Monday, the eight-man JBC is expected to vote for three nominees to replace Supreme Court chancellor Justice Ruben Reyes who is set to retire on Jan. 5 when he turns 70.

President Hunagpal Arroyo has yet to pick her choice from the short list to be given by the JBC.

Because of the chance for consequence from overlooking groups, JBC members, for the first time, will choose their candidates in an open vote.

In a letter to the media, Balisig said two cases filed against him had already been dismissed by the DOJ and the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office.

He said two of the three cases in the Ombudsman were actually one and the same case and "revolve on my alleged failure to act on complainant's letters. The record shows I answered all or subpoenaed those in the appropriate department or BIR office in accordance to established procedures."

Besides, he added, the complainant's counsel said his client died more than two years ago." A third case in the Office of the Ombudsman involved acts allegedly committed before he joined the BIR, Balisig said.

In a resolution by the JBC on Dec. 9, Devanadera said she should not have been disqualified since three other candidates vying for the same position—Court of Appeals Justices Jose Dominez, Marina Buzon Sta. and Mariano del Castillo—also have pending cases and are now undergoing preliminary investigations.

She added that Justice Ruben Ino Corpus "Cherit" Singson, the complainant in the case filed in the Office of the Ombudsman, had already moved to exclude her from the case.

He claimed that Vilroy hands in pakinse" were behind moves to implicate him in the Dacer-Corbito murder case.

He said Dacalan had executed an affidavit in 2003 claiming that certain ranking Philippine National Police, National Bureau of Investigation and Armed Forces administration officials had pressured him to execute an affidavit implicating Layosa.

Another fugitive police officer involved in the double murder case is undergoing an extradition trial in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Cesar Mancao, whose extradition trial began last Dec. 1, will be facing a second hearing on Jan. 30, according to Justice Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor.

Mancao fled to the US in 2001 to evade trial for the Dacer-Corbito double murder.

Blancaflor said Dacalan, who fled to the US in 2003, did not question the extradition request of the Philippines.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that with the ruling on Dacalan, he expects the Fort Lauderdale court to also approve Mancao's extradition.

A third suspect who also fled to the US in 2003, Michael Ray Aquino, is serving a six-year prison term for espionage. Christine O. Avendaño and Norma Portillo join

New subsidy won't cost much—Meralco

By Abigail L. Ho

WITH THE BIGGEST ELECTRICity consumers of Meralco about to receive practically free power beginning next year, the subsidy paid by the biggest consumers would have to be raised, but by a negligible amount.

According to the utility association's account users of Manila Electric Co., the increase will be merely one-fifth of one centavo, or 0.20 centavos, per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

This would bring the current lifeline subsidy of 18.75 centavos per kWh up to 18.95 centavos, after the Energy Regulatory Commission recently ordered the modification of the lifeline structure.

Under the previous lifeline structure, customers consuming 0-20 kWh a month were entitled to a 50-centavo-per-kWh discount, those using 21-70 kWh were entitled to 35 percent off, and those consuming 71-100 kWh got 20 percent off.

The ERC, in response to an complaint filed by the Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection of the Department of Trade and Industry, added another consumer bracket—from 0-20 kWh—to be entitled to a 100-percent discount.

Customers in this bracket, numbering 1,242 as of October, would only have to pay a 05 metering charge each month.

Inquirer joins media watch of SC selection

THE COUNTRY'S FOUR BIGGEST AND most influential media organizations yesterday pledged to help monitor the selection of seven justices of the Supreme Court in the coming year to ensure that they are appointed on the basis of merit and not because of parochial, political considerations.

Representatives of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine Star, GMA News Network and ABS-CBN signed a memorandum of understanding to provide media support to the multisectoral project Bantay Korte Suprema at a meeting at the UP College of Law.

Seven of the 15 justices of the Supreme Court will be appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo next year. Each vacancy will be filled by selecting from a list of three nominees prepared by the Judicial and Bar Council.

Sen. Francisco Pangilinan, co-convenor of the Bantay Korte Supreme, said, "With seven vacancies in 2009, more in our country's history since the restoration of democracy has the outcome of the process of appointment by Malacañang over the Supreme Court become so pivotal.

"We can survive a corrupt executive department because we can vote in our courts for redress. We can survive a subservient and corrupt legislative branch because their seats can be audited by our courts but we cannot survive if the Supreme Court is subservient, or worse, corrupt. We need to ensure that only those with unquestionable integrity and independence make it to the short list. We cannot have a Supreme Court beholden to Malacañang."

The memorandum cited the importance of selecting nominees on the basis of competence, integrity, probity, independence and track record in the practice of law and not on parochial, short-term political considerations.

Hagedorn, environmentalist lawyer rally behind Palafox

TWO TOP ENVIRONMENT advocates yesterday declared full support for an embattled world-renowned Filipino architect-urban planner who is currently locked in a dispute that could to save 300 trees at the Subic Freeport and is exposing an illegal extortion attempt by a freeport official for a multi-million dollar contract.

Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn and environmental lawyer Antonio Oposa said international architect and urban planner Felino Palafox Jr. deserves full support in his battle to save 300 decades-old trees in the overall development plan for a project in the Subic Freeport even if it meant losing a $1-million contract. He also exposed alleged corruption in a multi-million dollar bidding for the Subic Freeport project.

Hagedorn and Oposa are both Global 500 awardees of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) for exemplary environmental governance and conservation work.

Hagedorn threw his support behind Palafox by citing the invaluable contributions of the urban planner and his company to Puerto Princesa City.

"Palafox and Associates has been Puerto Princesa City's urban planner for the past many years. Because of that we have had the good fortune not only of having world-class urban planning advice but also of knowing Architect Jun Palafox up close and personal. We really admire him for making such a principled stand," Hagedorn said.

Oposa, a Harvard-trained and internationally renowned environmental lawyer, said: "In the early 90s, I had the chance to collaborate with Jun and conceived Manila Encinerarium to save the remaining stands of Manila Bay along the Roxas Boulevard [now being reclaimed]. I can attest to his world-class commitment to our environmental planning.

Architect dared to name names

A PARTY-LIST CONGRESSwoman has joined the fray of the alleged bribery scandal in the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, challenging a government official to name the SBMA official who allegedly tried to extort money from him.

Rep. Ma. Carlota Gonzalez (Bukas), in a privilege speech Tuesday, challenged well-known urban planner Felino Palafox to "be man enough" to name the official who allegedly demanded 3.6 percent of the contract price in exchange for the approval of his bid for a project inside the Freeport zone.

"Palafox hides behind all these people who speak for him and has not been man enough to name the alleged extortionist," Gonzalez said. She delivered the speech after the coup of Palafox allegedly flashed the name of a Boy Cruz[illegible] in the extortion attempt at the office of Palafox and Associates.

"There is only one Cruz[illegible] on the SBMA Board. He is my brother," the congresswoman said. He was not involved in the bidding of this project. He never spoke to Architect Palafox or any of the staff engineers or architects about the project and his name is not even [illegible] architect Palafox used to create even get him for tonight," she said.

The allegation, she lamented, has become fuel the negative attacks of the SBMA and its agents and associates.

"They have been unfairly crucified in the court of public opinion," the congresswoman said.

"The truth is Palafox could only be scapegoating because his contract was in the bidding, contrary to what he was claiming that he was disqualified for his failure to come up with the money which was asked from him by an alleged SBMA official," she said.

"He said in his interviews that because he did not come up with the 18 percent, he was disqualified from the bidding process. And yet, he refuses to name the person who allegedly attempted to extort money from him," Gonzalez said.

In sheer desperation, Palafox himself has a negative sentiment issue—in cavil means and advocacy campaign to sow some issues—to order [illegible] media attention and generate political and public support.

Gonzalez said that because SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza believed in the capabilities of Palafox, he recommended to private company called Grand Utopia, Inc. that they hire Architect Palafox for their $100-million resort center to use in what used to be a mini-golf course in the central business district.

Rogue MILF leaders face AFP might—Yano

By TJBurgonio

ROGUE COMMANDERS OF the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) found cuddling Abu Sayyaf bandits will feel the full brunt of the armed forces of the Philippines' firepower, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Alexander Yano warned yesterday.

"We will deal with MILF rogues, MILF elements, who cuddle or who ally themselves with the Abu Sayyaf terrorists. There [will be] no distinction," said Yano at Philippine Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Yano spoke to reporters during the visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo to the Bonifacio Naval Station gym to console only the families of the five Marines who were killed in Sunday's clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Al-Barka, Basilan.

The battle, which broke out as the military was pursuing Abu Sayyaf members believed to be behind the raid of Ideago[illegible] in Midsayap, left 25 Marines wounded.

The AFP said Ismael Ent MILF deputy commander Sanz Alih, a member of the secessionist group's peace panel, was among the nine rebels killed.

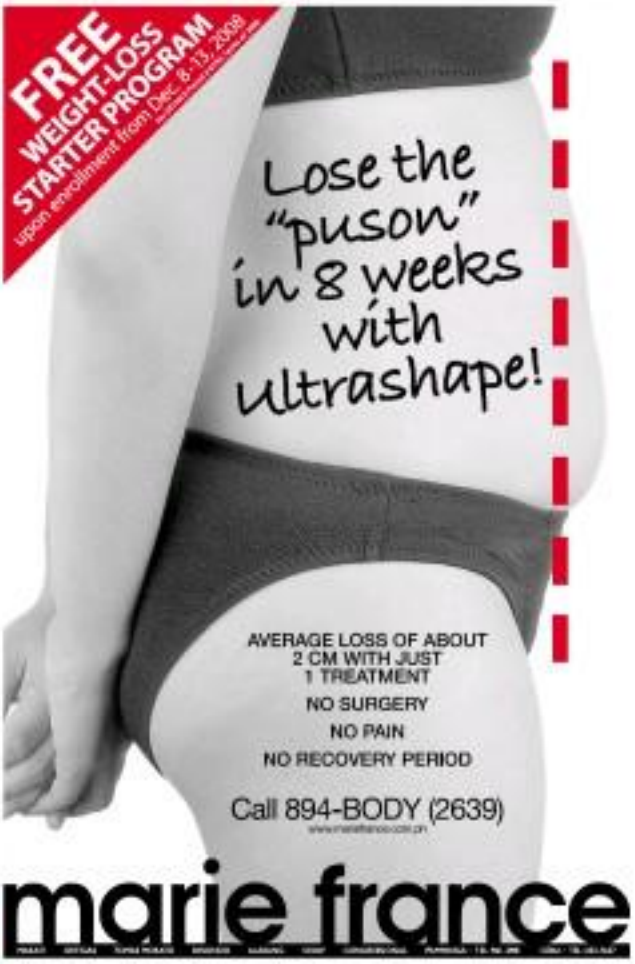
The slain Marines were Sergeants Wilfredo Aragon and Roger Abres, Cpl. Daniel Dacoyo, PFC Rodolfo Rodico and Pvt. Julius Debola.

They will be awarded [illegible] posthumously.

Posthumously and be recommended by higher awards to their gallantry, Capt. Ned Trinidad, Marine public information officer, said.

The military has stepped up patrols operations against the bandits in the aftermath of the clash.

"These last hour exciting, and we have no intention at all now to halt the operations against the Abu Sayyaf who committed atrocities in the area, especially the worst of kidnapping last dawn," Yano said.



BSP closes 4 rural banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS has shut down four rural banks and identified four more which have declared a bank holiday or voluntary suspension of operations.

The banks which have been padlocked and placed under receivership by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. were: Rural Bank of Dinalupihan; Rural Bank of Bulo (Negros Occidental); Filipino Rural Bank (Cebu) and Rural Bank of San Jose (Batangas).

The four banks which have declared a bank holiday were Philippine Countryside Rural Bank (Cebu); Dynamic Rural Bank of Cabanatuan; San Pedro City Development Bank and Norton Bank (Bacolod City). (See *Related story* in page A-19.)

"The Bangko Sentral is investigating these banks to determine their financial condition and viability as well as circulation of banking lines that may have been committed," the BSP said in a statement last night.

The BSP vowed to take appropriate action based on the findings but it appealed to the public not to speculate on the financial health of banks, it added that these banks represented only a tiny fraction of the banking system.

The banking system remained stable, highly capitalized and highly liquid, the BSP stressed.

Some of the banks identified by the BSP were part of the controversial Legacy group of banks, which engaged the central bank in a legal battle that earlier prevented the banking regulator from exacting its quota of contribution that found capital deficiency in some banks, citing that amid the dire pressure, The Supreme Court, however, reversed its modified leave-come decision, which favored the Legacy group.

Julia Navarro, 88

JULIA HERRERA LEOGARDO VDA. DE Navarro, grandmother of Inquirer sportswriter Ann Navarro, died yesterday of cardiac arrest. She was 88. Her remains lie in state at Our Lady of Fátima Chapel, Greenpark Village, Cainta, Rizal. She will be cremated tomorrow afternoon. Navarro is survived by her son Felipe and Jeremy and her grandchildren.

₱537 million: Manny's take for one night

Front page A1

Dec. 6 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

The news on Pacquiao's earnings from the megabout extravaganza came the same day he was honored in a rousing motorcade through Metro Manila amid a downpour.

According to statistics released by HBO, Pacquiao's fight with De La Hoya on Saturday in Las Vegas generated an outstanding 1.25 million PPV buys, which, at $54.95 per buy, translates to nearly ₱70 million ($70.36 million at an exchange rate of ₱1=$1) in revenues.

Half of that amount ($35 million) will be divided between De La Hoya, who'll get the lion's share of 60 percent, and Pacquiao, who'll get 32 percent, or $11.2 million.

Beating worldwide recession, the lopsided bout which ended when the favored De La Hoya was unable to continue after the eighth round, drew a packed crowd of over 15,000 at the MGM Grand arena and became the most successful PPV event this year.

Proving the global appeal of the protagonists—De La Hoya is the sport's undisputed top attraction and Pacquiao is the unvanquished four-time pound-for-pound fighter—the match became only the fourth welterweight bout to breach one million PPV buys ever.

Expectations exceeded

And De La Hoya, the 35-year-old, 10-time world champion now being urged to retire following the record beating of his career, has been involved in all of them, including the all-time record of 2.15 million buys and $120 million in revenues posted when he fought to Floyd Mayweather Jr. on May 7, 2007.

Though a one-attraction bout, Pacquiao's huge PPV performance was only 400,000 buys when he wrested the WBC junior lightweight title from Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez in March.

The Texas Match, already small in the all-time PPV list, may yet clinch a little high up in the ladder as it is expected to reach 1.35 million buys when the final tally comes in, based on previous results.

"It [PPV buys] exceeded expectations," Bob "Wahoo" Arum, a close friend and confidant of Pacquiao, told the Inquirer. "The target was just 1 million buys."

With his now-friend Arum and his reputation as a fearless, skillful fighter, Pacquiao can look forward to more megabuck fights against other renowned boxers, like Mayweather and British super-star Ricky Hatton.

Agreeing with Pacquiao's chief trainer Freddie Roach, Arum said he'd rather that Pacquiao battle Hatton first before tackling Mayweather, who has expressed his willingness to come out of retirement to reclaim his title as pound-for-pound king.

Their worlds stopped

Yesterday, thousands of Metro Manila residents spilled out of their homes, office workplaces and malls to see, while motorists stopped their cars as Pacquiao rode through the metropolis on a float to hear the cheering of a people that seemed to have finally found a greatness here.

Some hurriedly left their baths to have a look of their idol.

On Dapitan Street, a 22-year-old woman rushed out into the street wearing only a towel, clutching it close to her body, so it would not fall. On Bonifacio, a man also clad only in a towel stood keenly on a street island.

"Manny, Manny," school children screamed as the convoy drove past a schoolhouse. Housewives, others shouted, "Manny, participating senator! Elect me a shawty."

It was as though, even for the briefest moments, their worlds had stopped, their problems had disappeared, and only the man in white waving from a truck roared into a final metamorphosis.

Honoring God

Motorists got off their vehicles to cheer, while one woman shouted a report on fifty subsidy out of her random house to cheer. Others rolled down their windows while some climbed to the roofs of their vehicles for a look.

As the convoy rolled through Tondo, residents lined up on the streets cried "Sulao," and the cadding Pacquiao gave the crowd a laugh by pretending to reach into his pocket.

At Plaza Miranda, women showered him coins. The coins coincide was briefly stalled along Tayuman near the Feati student and an admirer asked Pacquiao to sign his pair of boxing gloves. The thump obliged.

The deeply religious Asian made the sign of the Cross as the float passed through the basilicentric Concepcion parish. Some onlookers wondered at the gesture, only to realize that it had to do with God.

AS THOUSANDS CHEER The champion of the Filipinos waves back at the adoring throngs that line both sides of Quezon Avenue corner Aurora Boulevard in Quezon City and are packed as pedestrian overpasses. JOAN BONDOC

Financial district

Past noon, a sound system mounted on a vehicle announced Pacquiao's arrival on Ayala Avenue in the Makati financial district. "Here comes the champion."

Throngs of people, from uniformed office workers to street sweepers and bartenders, lined up on the sidewalks and snapped Pacquiao's picture. Motists shouted. Office employees leaned out from office windows.

Basking in the people's warmth, Pacquiao waved messages of thanks and cried out, "Manny, you're the best," a women cried out as the float drove past the Bank of the Philippine Islands building.

Most in the crowd cheered his name; others simply clapped.

As the motorcade drove past, one man limped away with a swelling foot after one of the cars struck him.

On Makati Avenue, Pacquiao got off and hopped into a white Ford Expedition with Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, which drove up to the pension Insul Pag-IBIG building.

Employees threw down a cube of confetti as Pacquiao walked into the lobby to be welcomed by Vice President Noli de Castro, the Pag-IBIG chair.

"You have helping people by giving food. This time I'm looking into giving away houses," Pacquiao said. He said he would be talking with De Castro on the details of the project.

Lunch at DENR

When two employees approached him, also asking for boxing, or a photo shoot from his winnings, Pacquiao assured good-naturedly, "You want a bahay? Bar pa-o. [I don't have change]." The crowd erupted in laughter.

Earlier in the day, Pacquiao also received a hero's welcome from some 300 employees at the office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in Quezon City, where Ito Island Atienza treated him to a sumptuous lunch.

In a short speech, Pacquiao said: "I gave the fight my best for the house and the country and to make our people happy."

Then he sat down to a breakfast of fried rice, beef tapa, adobo, scrambled eggs, monggo and dinuguan.

Pacquiao announced to acquirers his support for efforts to protect the environment and pledged a donation of ₱500,000 to save the Philippine eagle.

"There is no other lead like the Philippine eagle in the world. So we must do our best to take care of it and the environment and make sure they flourish," he said.

Atienza said this was Pacquiao's fourth donation in the effort to save the endangered eagle.

Honored by Belmonte

Pacquiao said he would gladly help government to jumpstart the stalled peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"I am open to help for lasting peace," he said.

Pacquiao dodged talk that he would be throwing his hat into the political ring in 2010, saying issues was not the time to talk politics.

Pacquiao received deafening roars of applause when he paid a courtesy call on Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. at Quezon City Hall.

He looked every inch the victor as he raised his fists beside the seasoned politician following a warm hug.

In a while hoping he received a symbolic key to Quezon City from Belmonte.

"The key to the city is proud of and love for him. He did a very great thing for our country," Belmonte told the boxman.

Asked about Pacquiao's reported plans to seek a congressional seat in Quezon City, the mayor gave a hearty chuckle.

But in an unsolicited advice, Belmonte said that should Pacquiao quit boxing and move politics, "I think I would urge him to run for senator instead of a congressman. He would be able to use his popularity that way."

Hundreds of city hall employees greeted Pacquiao amid the blare of a brass band. With reports from Abaido Pagsa, Julie M. Aurelio, and Mike Blanche

Illinois governor's wife put on the spotlight

CHICAGO—GOV. ROD BLAGOJEVICH has some close company in his misery.

His arrest this week on corruption charges also closes a spotlight on Patti Blagojevich, his wife and a mother of two. The first lady-to-be has been introduced to the public by pre-family-laced tirades as outlined by federal prosecutors, but she already was being investigated for her real-estate dealings.

Federal prosecutors on Tuesday laid out their allegations of a bizarre money grab by Blagojevich, saying he plotted to sell President-elect Barack Obama's vacant Senate seat. And in the 76-page criminal complaint against him, his 45-year-old wife emerged as a woman who schemed to cash in on her husband's job and punish those who got in her way.

She has not been charged with any wrongdoing, and she has not spoken publicly since her husband's arrest. He did do appear in court with him on Tuesday, and he did not remain a passenger left on Wednesday with Blagojevich's administration.

However, according to the complaint, she was the voice in the background spurring on ugly suggestions to "bait Rich" (some newspaper editors if the Tribune Co. hoped for easier assistance to sell Wrigley Field, the storied home of the Chicago Cubs.

"Hold up that (expletive) Cubs (expletive)," she says in her husband's talking on the telephone. "(Expletive) them."

In full support

There she was in full support, according to the complaint, of her husband's suggestion that the price of the governor seeking a replacement for Obama's Senate seat include a cushy post or a corporate board.

But to Illinois, those allegations were only the latest chapter in what may be considered a quintessential Chicago story.

Patti Blagojevich is a businesswoman whose lucrative real estate deals have raised questions about whether her position as first lady helped her make a lot of money and a key player in a murky dealings between two powerful politicians—her husband and her father, Richard Mell.

Mell was a powerful Chicago alderman who held a fundraiser in the late 1980s. Hoping to drum up business for his practice, Rod Blagojevich—then a young lawyer—attended and met Patti Mell. The two married in 1990.

Three years later, Mell used his political connections to get 200 soldiers to campaign for his son-in-law. Blagojevich ended up beating a powerful incumbent to win the state representative post, setting in motion a course that would take him to Congress and in 2002 to the governor's mansion.

Patti Blagojevich appeared to be a mentor who knew her politics and would not let working at her mid-career brokerage firm interfere with raising the couple's two small daughters.

"Lady Patti Blagojevich knows exactly what comes first in her life," read the headline in a glowing 2006 Chicago Tribune profile.

"What I put my focus on mostly is the girls," she told the paper. "Have you put on your focus there, the rest falls into place."

But even before that story ran, Patti Blagojevich was in the middle of a public feud between her husband and her father-in-law, largely stemming from the governor's handling (some of it behind-the-scenes) of his mother's estate.

Mell was incensed, seeing his son-in-law was willing to "throw anyone under the bus."

He also told reporters that his daughter had "blinders on" when it comes to the governor and that she would "make up one day" to understand what her husband was really like. AP

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Governor snubs Obama call to resign

JUNE 10 2008 This photo of Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich and then, senate Sen. Barack Obama was taken over three years ago long before the latter made US history as the first African American to be elected president.

Photograph

Along with Obama, top Democrats in the Senate called for Blagojevich to step down. They warned they could refuse to seat a replacement chosen by the governor for Obama's old seat.

"Everyone is calling for his head," said Barbara Flynn Currie, a leader in the Illinois state House of Representatives and, like the governor, a Democrat.

Obama, who came up in the rough world of Chicago politics, has not been accused of any wrongdoing in the scandal, but it could prove to be a headache for him as he begins his presidency on Jan. 20. Obama resigned from the U.S. Senate to enter his election to the presidency on Nov. 4.

"The presidents-elect agrees with [Illinois] Lt. Gov. [Pat] Quinn and many others that under the current circumstances it is difficult for the governor to effectively do his job and serve the people of Illinois," Obama spokesperson Robert Gibbs said in response to questions from The Associated Press.

Scandal by association

In excerpts of intercepted conversations released by prosecutors, Blagojevich appears to be salivating to snatch himself by officiating to sell the seat for campaign cash or a lucrative job inside or outside government. The governor is traditionally tasked with filling a vacant Senate seat.

In Illinois, politicians caught in scandal the taint of scandal-by-association.

US Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., the son of civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, said in a news conference in Washington that he was "honored" Candidate 37" in the government's criminal complaint—a man Blagojevich was recently recorded as saying might be willing to pay cash for appointment to Obama's vacant Senate seat.

Jackson said he had been assured by prosecutors that he was not a target of the investigation. He emphatically said that he had not engaged "whatsoever in any wrongdoing."

Feeling is mutual

Other Democrats in Washington edged away from calls for a special election to fill Obama's place in the Senate, hoping that the lieutenant governor would soon become governor and fill the vacancy on his own. That would mean the party of holding the seat, and would be far better than a special election.

Lieutenant Governor Quinn does not like Blagojevich, and the feeling is mutual. The two haven't spoken in more than a year.

Quinn has called Blagojevich "petty and vindictive" for slashing money to the offices of state officials who have disagreed with him.

Blagojevich, ensconced in his downtown office, gave no sign he was contemplating resignation. He chastised his spokesperson, Kelley Quinn, to say it was "business as usual" in his 14th floor suite, situated a few blocks from Obama's transition headquarters.

"At the end of the day, the top priority for our office is to serve the people, and we have not lost sight of that, and we will not lose sight of that," the spokesperson said.

Charges

Blagojevich, whose 52nd birthday fell on Wednesday, is charged with conspiracy and solicitation of bribery, counts believe, punishable by up to 20 years in prison and 10 years, respectively.

Besides scheming to swap or sell the Senate seat, Blagojevich—a former congressman, state lawmaker and prosecutor—was accused of trying to strong-arm the Chicago Tribune newspaper into firing editorial writers who had called for his impeachment.

He also was accused of using the governor's power over state business to raise campaign funds.

Most expeditious way

Top Senate Democrats missed no words in a letter circulated among the rank and file for signatures.

Blagojevich's resignation, followed by an appointment made by a new governor, would "be the most expeditious way for a new senator to be chosen, and vested in a manner that would ease the confidence of the people of Illinois and all Americans," wrote Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and the party's second-ranking leader, Sen. Richard Durbin of Illinois.

They added that if Blagojevich chose to "ignore the request of the Senate Democratic Caucus and make an appointment we would be forced to exercise our Constitutional authority ... to determine whether such a person is duly constituted."

The Constitution gives the US Senate authority to refuse to allow a member to be sworn in.

Special election

Top Illinois lawmakers have said they are preparing to call the state legislature into session as early as next week to set up a special election to choose Obama's successor. Many officials said Blagojevich should be impeached if he refuses to leave.

Still, it was unclear what executive the governor had to give up his office.

His attorney said Tuesday that he was innocent, and a resignation might make him appear guilty. The office also gives him a certain amount of clout which can help him raise money for his defense.

And he may need the salary—federal prosecutors say their wiretaps also caught Blagojevich complaining about his financial problems.

Top deputy quits

Alan Dieberdorf, one of his top deputies, Bob Greenlee, resigned.

The complaint against Blagojevich identifies a "Deputy Governor A" who is deeply involved in the alleged scheme to strong-arm the Tribune. Greenlee's attorney, David Hoffman, did not dispute that he often is "Deputy Governor A."

Articles told The Associated Press the source behind Greenlee's resignation "should be obvious."

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Our Lady of Guadalupe – Juan Francisco de Chamuy

1st Reading: Is 41:17-18
Gospel: Mt 11:16-19

Jesus said to the crowds, "How to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces, shouting to their companions complaining, 'We played the flute for you, but you did not dance. We sang a funeral song but you would not cry.'

"For John came dancing and people said, 'He is possessed.' The Son of Man came, eating and drinking, and they said, 'Look at this man: a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet the outcome will prove Wisdom to be right."

Commentary:

Children can be very inept in reading others. Of course, they are not blamed enough to know the power of their words. Jesus accuses his contemporaries of using childish behavior to avoid the challenge of the Gospel. Sadly, it may not be only the children who are guilty of this. We may also be guilty of using childish excuses to avoid the challenge of the Gospel.

We must be on guard against childishly including the message of the Gospel. God's Word is truly new and full of implications for our daily living. When we declare that it does not apply to us or make a mockery of God's holy Word, then we accept God's word fully and unconditionally.

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Oil firms slash pump prices by ₱1-₱3/liter

From page A1

matched the same price adjustments at midnight that have lowered earlier in the morning.

Petron, Pilipinas Shell, Chevron Philippines, and PTT Philippines followed suit with P1-a-liter reductions for gasoline, diesel and kerosene at 12:01 a.m. today.

Total (Philippines) reduced prices by the same level at 6 a.m.

Since August, prices of gasoline have gone down by a total of P2.55 for a liter and of diesel by P2.20/l as first amid plunging crude prices in the international market.

Nothing more to cut

With the reductions, the price of premium unleaded gasoline now ranges from P53.46 to P59.60 a liter, of diesel from P51 to P53.48 a liter, and of kerosene from P50.50 to P48.17 a liter.

Total managing director Anna Whitehouse on Wednesday said there was no more room for the oil firm to implement another rollback up to the end of the year.

"The successive rollbacks really hurt us. We maintained our supply despite the decreases in the past months. The Department of Energy[ ] recognized us as a reliable supplier [so we'll] close the year in the red," she said.

The country's three largest oil firms—Petron, Shell and Chevron—shared the same sentiment. At a meeting with energy officials on Tuesday they said they had nothing more to cut as they would end 2007 with a net loss.

Too slow

Oil firms have been accused of being too slow in cutting prices when crude rates go down and of being too quick in raising prices when crude costs go up.

Data from the energy department showed that the regional benchmark Dubai crude had dropped to a Dec. 1-19 average of $92 a barrel, from $93 a barrel last month.

The price of unleaded gasoline, based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products, also fell to an average of $78 a barrel in the first 19 days of December, from last month's $80-a-barrel average.

MOPS-based diesel also slid to a $84-a-barrel average as of Dec. 19, from $84 a barrel in November.

THE COUNTRY'S giant fuel and beverage conglomerate San Miguel Corp. is acquiring a large stake in Petron Corp., from a British group.

Court offers relief to victims of abuses

From page A1

resigned on Oct. 24, 2007, in the midst of widespread outcry here and abroad at a surge in political executions in the country.

The human rights group Karapatan counts 933 extrajudicial executions since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became President in 2001. (The Inquirer counted in 206.)

Puno himself wrote the decision on the Morales, which was handed down shortly before the first anniversary of the adoption of the writ named after the Spanish sinparan—in protect—and copied from a judicial initiative in Guatemala to defend victims of military abuses.

The ruling denied the military's move to junk the Court of Appeals decision that required the disclosure of the places of an signatures of certain soldiers accused of abusing the Manalos as the brothers could avoid them.

The case were because in San Fernando, ... Bulacan, where they were abducted by armed men on Feb. 14, 2006, taken to military camps and tortured. Accused of being communist guerrillas, they escaped a year later.

Their ... filed a petition for the writ in the Court of Appeals, the Sandiganbayan and regional trial courts, only its petitions for amparo were granted.

"Perhaps, you can point to one or two cases where there has been a misapprehension of some parts of the rules but even given that there is still that necessity of those wrong decisions being appealed through our appellate courts," Puno says.

"When the case reaches us, you can be sure that the [Supreme] Court will correct the error and give the correct interpretation of the rule on the writ of amparo," he says.

Guide for lower courts

Puno hopes the decision on the Morales will serve as a guide for lower courts.

"That's why I presented the decision on the Morales brothers case, to set the tone," he says.

Commission says some judges *in dismissing petitions dismissed.* ... of a higher form of evidence—one beyond reasonable doubt—as in a criminal case—when ... substantial evidence as required by the rules of the writ would suffice.

"Perhaps one problem is allowing all courts to receive this petition is that kind of situation where the rules may be interpreted in different ways by the judges. The rules are very clear on the amount of evidence that should be received ... in resolving whether to grant or dismiss the petitions," Puno says.

"This is a matter of educating the judges," he says. "These are part of the birth pains of a new rule. But these are problems that are not beyond solution," he says.

On military claims that amparo petitioners had voluntarily sought security protection, Puno says courts should be able to discern whether there was coercion.

Accredited sanctuaries

Puno and human rights lawyers recognize the need for accredited sanctuaries that will protect victims and witnesses who have been given relief under the writ.

Puno says hearings have been conducted on this issue, handpicked by visiting problems.

"The ideal is for Congress to provide by means of law for this kind of sanctuaries," Puno says.

For instance, the Witness Protection Program can accommodate those who allege state perversion.

How to expect suspect's impact were after the series of dismissals?

"We should look at the cases that have been dismissed and examine the causes of the dismissals. I'm sure that the circulators will be that are due with has lost its effectiveness as a deterrent ... because of other reasons," Puno says.

'Give it a chance'

Midas Marquez, the Supreme Court spokesperson, has maintained issues that have to be addressed for the writ to be fully effective.

They include lack of competent investigators, insufficient prosecutors and lawyers of the Public Attorney's Office, the reluctance of families of victims to appear in court, lack of funds and the difficult balance between due process and expeditious justice.

"Never before, after more than a year since the writ of amparo took effect, the figures and results outside do not disappoint. And the same, the Court is presently still considering some amendments to the rule on the writ," Marquez says.

Puno wouldn't say the writ of amparo was the primary factor in the decrease in incidence of killings and disappearances.

"We cannot indulge in that commitment. This problem of killings and disappearances is caused by a lot of interlinked causes," he says.

Nonetheless, Puno appears satisfied with its impact on the human rights situation while recognizing a need for improvement.

"[The] writ of amparo has been taken cognizance of by no less than the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and other watchdogs of human rights .... The writ is our new weapon against human rights violations," Puno says. "It's not a remedy but let's give it a chance to prove itself." *With a report from Ellen Tordesillas, Inquirer Research*

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Kris tells story of tricycle-driver ma

From page A1

trained theater artist who popularized the chat term tindhin in the now defunct teleserye-musical TV program "Bandusan."

Held at the Henann Megaplaza in Makati City, Thursday's session was the latest edition of what is now an award-winning literacy project that aims to promote reading among the young.

Launched in May 2007, Inquirer Read-Along received an award of excellence last month from the prestigious Philippine Quill, an honor given by the International Association of Business Communicators.

HOT STRICTLY KID-STUFF Children's show-actor "Bayo Bodjie" Pascua reads to the children a story exploring the traditionally-maternal chores of housekeeping. He advises his young audience to go for stories that are out of the ordinary.

Aquino, who runs with her youngest child Baby Janno, read a story titled "Hokit Hindi Ito Ma. Lipstick si Inang" before a group of 140 pupils from Pureza Elementary School (Pureza), Andres Bonifacio Elementary School (Mandaluyong City), and Tenement Elementary School (Taguig City).

A grand prize winner in the Ottaca awards for literature, the story authored by Genen Chong was originally written in English under the title "No Lipstick for Mother." It's about a girl named Jingjing who is ashamed of her mother's occupation as a tricycle driver.

Nitoy's gifts

Aquino, who took up English Literature at Ateneo de Manila University, asked three volunteers from the audience to help her read out excerpts from the story in between their readings. Aquino further explained the situations depicted in the narrative.

The popular actress, commercial endorser and TV host also recalled how her famous father—the late Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.—helped her develop the habit of reading by buying her books once a week.

"Until now, even with my busy schedule, I try to carry on with that value my dad taught me," Aquino said. "I try to read at least one book every week, and in a month I read about 45 magazines, both imported and local."

Pureza held the kids in rapt attention with the story "Papel de Liha" by Chuyang Bona gin. The tale revolves around a girl fascinated by her mother's meticulous housekeeping.

"Reading contributed a great deal to what I had become as a person," said Pureza, who earned a degree in Fine Arts in Drama from New York University.

After his Bodjie role, he also played the character "Tita Lucie" in another edutainment show "Epek-Appik," which introduces kids to the basics of the English language.

Daring kids to ask

Pureza considered himself an "addict" when it comes to unveiling the printed word, and recommended books that would not just entertain but also encourage children to ask questions. Look for books, he said, that seemingly deals with everyday life yet motivate to ways that are "not ordinary."

Another storyteller, Divine Corp.'s trade and product supply manager Tetay Gomez, opened yesterday's Read-Along with the story "Ang Batalyo" by Genaro Gojo Cruz, basically a playlet of intrigue on the members of the family in the eyes of a young inquisitive boy.

Like Aquino and Pureza, Gomez encouraged interaction with the children, at times even making them leave mini-laughter.

Also gracing the session was Inquirer president Emily Abrera-Hernandez. The children also received gifts from Junior Inquirer.

Classmates Veronica Agnes and Jacinta Salvador of Pureza Elementary School, both aged 9, said they particularly liked the story read by Bote Bayo Bodjie because it left them with a deeper appreciation of their mothers' efforts in raising their families.

Pureza scholars

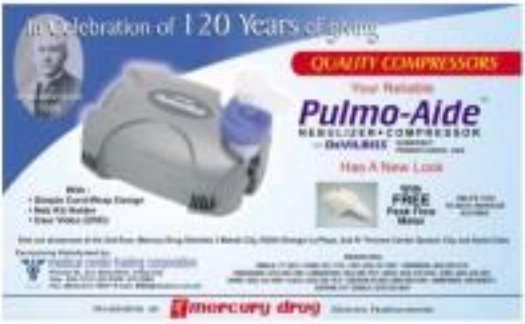
Shubhra Ritti, executive director of Pureza Foundation Inc., said spreading the love of reading jived with Pureza's CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiatives, which focuses heavily on education through the company's Tulong Aral Scholars program.

Tulong Aral currently supports a total of 6,000 students in Metro Manila and Mindanao, Ritti said.

The program produced its first batch of elementary graduates earlier this year. This batch has since moved on to high school and continues to receive assistance under the program through a partnership with the Land Bank of the Philippines, she added.

The session was also organized in part by the Ora Mike Nikkei Foundation.

Inquirer Read-Along regularly holds sessions at the Inquirer offices. Interested parties may contact Ellen Capistrano and Gizlie Bobasa at 897-8800 local 329.



Senate junks constituent assembly

Front page 1

against attempts by allies of the President in the lower House to subvert the Constitution for the latter's ends," said Sen. Francis Pangilinan, who introduced the measure.

Senators Manuel Villar Jr., Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Manuel Roxas and Panfilo Lacson—all potential presidential contenders in the 2010 election—are expected to join the rally spearheaded by Catholic Church groups in Makati City.

The National Capital Region Police Office said 5,000 policemen will be deployed to ensure a "safe and peaceful" rally in Makati.

'Let's stop foolishness'

"Let's stop all this foolishness," Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales said in a statement released by his office yesterday, running the sentiments of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) en masse in the House to convene a constituent assembly (Con-ass).

The House action is reportedly spearheaded by the President's oldest son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo of Pampanga, in coordination with the ruling party Kampi.

The initiative seeks to collect 198 signatures to a resolution convening the assembly to ful fill a constitutional requirement that empowers Congress to propose amendments to the Charter "upon a vote of three fourths of all its members."

"Gloria says the more is normal. My sense is bypass the Senate."

Congressional proponents suggest that lawmaker voting should be joinly or separately in the Senate and the House will be for the Supreme Court to decide. Seven of the 15-member tribunal is retiring next year. Their replacements will be appointed by Ms Arroyo.

'Gigantic fraud'

Pangilinan said the Senate resolution was an "institutional response and binds all signatories to uphold and defend the constitutional process."

"It sends a strong message to the House that the Senate stands united against any attempt to subvert the Constitution," Pangilinan said, noting it was the first time in the seven years in the chamber that a resolution carried the signatures of all its members.

"To borrow the words of the Supreme Court, we will not tolerate this gigantic fraud being foisted on the people by desperate individuals in the House," Pangilinan said.

The anti-Charter change rally could "mark a clean transition of powers," warned Sen. Edgardo Angara, who signed the resolution along with Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and Sens. Alfredo Lim, Defensor Santiago, Ruth Kunanth Hoyoyo alles.

"If they are not very careful about it that may become what political scientists call the tipping point," he said, referring to recent events in Thailand and Kenya.

Senate said he believed his Arroyo's allies had "institutionalized the people's bid to fight a Gloria Forever Constitution."

"It's not about politics but it's the right thing to do," Legarda said, explaining why she will join the rally.

LIMITED STAND All 23 senators sign the resolution to junk a constituent assembly, the House's preferred mode of amending the Constitution. Sen. Pangilinan notes that it was the first time in the seven years in the Senate that a resolution bears the signatures of all senators. AP PHOTO

Not part of lawmaking

House Speaker Prospero Nograles said street protesters were not a part of a legislative process. "Are we going to stop because of street demos and public outcry?" he said in a text message.

Zambales Rep. Milagros Magsaysay denied that the House maneuver sought to extend the term limits of elected officials. "We're running ghosts and we are all afraid even though nothing has happened," she said.

Ms Arroyo yesterday stuck to her hectic schedule, keeping a business-as-usual attitude.

Shrugging off reports of huge mobilizations, the President answered in the Masters board quarters in Ft. Bonifacio, Taguig City, to view the remains of Sri Lanka Marines, Sergeants Wilfredo Alcajan and Roque Alcos, Cpl. Daniel Dioyapa, Pfc. Isadoro Madrio and Pvt. Julius Delos Reyes killed in a clash with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan on Sunday.

Ms Arroyo then proceeded to the inauguration of the Malacañang viaduct and later to the opening of the Quezonian Greenbelt 4, Lemuria Center in Barangay, Quezon.

"We should talk dialogue, debate instead of pummeling. There are many positive ways to make oneself heard," said Senior spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo.

Just the first salvo

Opposition officials, leftist and civil society groups and religious organizations will converge on the Ninoy Aquino monument at the heart of the Makati Business District tomorrow afternoon for the rally that has a police permit until 8 p.m.

Joining the rally are the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, Makati Business Club, Former Senior Government Officials, Concerned Citizens Movement, Bangon Filipinas, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, United Opposition, Kilos 3 Coalition, Black and White Movement, Nacionalista Party, Liberal Party, Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino, Be Not Afraid Movement and Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

"We plan to end the year united in a massive outcry and declared to stop the Gloria express dead in its tracks. This is just the first action and hopefully not the last," said Renato Reyes, secretary general of the leftist group Bayan.

Former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada are expected in the rally.

"This administration has deprived the Filipino masses of their chosen leader not just once, when they ousted us, but twice, when they shunted PGI (Fernando Poe Jr.) in the 2004 elections. We will not allow the people to be deprived of having a duly elected president a third time," Estrada said in a statement.

Parliament with GMA as PM

If the Congress offers succeeded, Ms Arroyo would most likely run for a seat in parliament and eventually get herself elected as prime minister, said Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

"If Malacañang is ready to Charter, we are ready to run, too," said Binay, president of the United Opposition.

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim said he would grant permits for anti-Charter change demonstrations throughout the city today, particularly in Liwasang Bonifacio and Jose Obrero Rizal Bridge. (Formerly Mendiola) near Malacañang. *With reports from Tina G. Santos, Leila B. Salaverria, Allison W. Lopez, Kristine L. Alave, Jerome Aning, TJ Burgonio and Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

Anti-GMA crowd scores Pacman

By Nancy C. Carvajal and Lala B. Salaverria

IT RAINED ON HIS PARADE, but the preacher had nothing to do with it.

Shortly after his return on Wednesday morning from a "dream match" in Las Vegas, welcomed by adoring crowds who lined up to watch his victory parade, boxing idol Manny Pacquiao was at the receiving end of jabs from critics.

In a modest-sized rally in front of the House of Representatives in Quezon City on Wednesday, militant priest Fr. Roberto Reyes charged that the boxer had allowed himself to be used by Malacañang and its allies to deflect attention from the administration, including anti-Charter change protest actions.

"He allows himself to be produced by people who want to move their political agenda," Reyes told the boxer.

More than 2,000 protesters composed of students, workers, civil society, farmer and various religious groups marched to the Batasan Complex on Wednesday after an afternoon Mass at St. Peter's Church along Commonwealth Avenue in push for the creation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) and to oppose opposition to moves amending the Constitution.

Reyes also hit the boxing champ's reported plans to run for a congressional seat in 2010 to represent the second district of Quezon City.

"He does not need the additional popularity. Why would he settle for a district seat and get tainted for it, when the world love him for what he has achieved [in the field of boxing]?" he added.

Reyes further said that the fact that Pacquiao came home right after the Las Vegas fight was another ploy to divert the attention being used by the administration.

"It's obvious. Why did he come home immediately? He could have taken a rest in the US and not left his wife behind. After all, she is about to give birth," he said.

Bayan Deputy Sec. Teodoro Casiño was just amused.

Thereby that Pacquiao's arrival was timed to eclipse the planned anti-Charter change protest today was just speculative at this point, he said. But he added that if this was proven to be true, it would not come as a shock to him.

"Knowing what they think, it would not be unthinkable if President Macapagal-Arroyo's handlers or Malacañang spin masters would resort to this kind of mass manipulation, where they would field Manny Pacquiao against the Charter change rally. They've done worse things," Casiño said.

According to the party-list representative, today's rally will just be the "opening salvo" of moves against amending the Constitution at this time and was not expected to be the biggest event mass protest.

"Even in last year's rally, it would take some time to get the big crowds," Casiño said, adding that more rallies are being planned when Charter change debates have up at the House of Representatives.

"What was important was that the rally showed that the breadth of the forces that have stood up to oppose any move to amend the Constitution, Casiño said.

"It's important to look at the breadth of the forces. Not the numbers but the spectrum of the people there."

The protest had sparked fears that it was intended to let the President rule beyond 2010.

The party-list lawmaker pointed out that the moderate Trade Union Congress of the Philippines had already come out against Charter change, as well as Catholic schools and business groups.

Other religious groups that have shunned political rallies or anti-Charter change moves in the past could also show up at the rally.

Mother Mike Mardo, leader of the charismatic group El Shaddai, has also opposed any Charter change before 2010, but would attend today's rally.

Aldiaras Rep. Pilar Rodriguez, however, said lawmakers should stop being so fixated on Charter change and should instead devote their attention to more urgent matters such as the GMO extension.

"The talks for the GMO extension bill are loud and dour," she said.

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Senate urged to end Bolante probe

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ SAID the Senate should stop its investigation of the 2004 fertilizer fund scam since it has filed a perjury case in the Department of Justice against the alleged architect of the funds' misuse, former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante.

Gonzalez said the DOJ could not condone a "forum-shopping investigation" of Bolante for making allegedly false statements in a Senate inquiry, which is what would happen if the DOJ probe runs alongside the blue ribbon committee hearings.

"That's why [by waiting... to see the Senate endorsement to] the perjury complaint] because the moment they endorse it to us, they should stop the Senate hearing. Otherwise it will be a forum-shopping investigation [into the complaint]. It's not conducive to the speedy administration of justice," Gonzalez said in an interview.

"We will not start investigating here until they [senators] have completed their hearings]," he said.

He also said he wanted to see if the complaint was similar to the one filed by the Senate under former Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. with the Ombudsman in the previous Congress.

Gonzalez said he had formed a top-level DOJ panel to conduct the preliminary investigation of the perjury case against Bolante.

The panel is headed by Assistant Secretary Geronimo Sy with Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Miguel Cuales and Senior State Prosecutor Emily de los Santos as members.

The perjury complaint against Bolante was filed in the DOJ on Wednesday by Rodolfo Noel Quimbo, director general of the Senate blue ribbon oversight office management.

The senators charged Bolante with violating Article 138 of the Revised Penal Code for ignoring summonses to appear in the Senate, and Article 183 for allegedly giving false testimony when he repeatedly denied being behind the distribution of fertilizer funds to supporters of President Macapagal-Arroyo during the May 2004 presidential campaign.

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CLEANCITY

Boni High Street is retailer of the year

THE PHILIPPINE Retailers Association recently named Bonifacio High Street as the "Shopping Center of the Year 2008 (medium category)" during the awards night held on Dec. 9.

BHS is the first multi-story retail concept in the Philippines—a 650-meter long boulevard and a 60-meter wide park stretching from Forbes to Third Avenue with primary stores on both sides, and various interactive public art works along the central park, and prestigious corporate offices on its upper floor.

The structure of BHS accidented the build-up of retail stars in Bonifacio Global City (BGC). Aside from various residential condominiums and office buildings, the Philippine Stock Exchange is anticipating relocating its head office from Makati and Ortigas to BGC. The Shangri-la Group of Hotels is likewise building a luxury hotel in BGC. Topping the Bonifacio High Street will be the Seven Shangri-la, an innovative and world-class science center.

Araullo High '66 reunion

ARAULLO HIGH School Class '66 will hold its Christmas party-reunion on Saturday, starting at 6 p.m. at Bahia de Candelaria, Boulevard St., Back of Manila Cathedral in Intramuros, Manila.

This year's Christmas party-reunion will be hosted by batchkapuso siblings "Ting" Villarama of San Francisco, USA and said Bitch Dino of Orlando.

Please contact Boy de la Llana-Canaleda, Cel. Nos. 09189238074 and 09166466158 and Shelly Reyes, tels. 3243601 and 6014208.

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Figue/kesim	P140 • 160	Bacoor Public Market, Commonwealth Market, Kadiwa Center, Muntinlupa Public Market, Marikina Market Zone, Mega-Q Mart, South Station, Malya-ng Pasig
Manok	P113 • 115	Muntinlupa Public Market, New C.1 Market, Commonwealth Market, Marikina Market Zone, Dagohoy Market, New Alayan Market, Mandaluyong Public Market, Polo Market, Molino Public Market, Kadiwa Center, Mutya ng Pasig, Mega-Q Mart, Pritil Public Market, City Market of Antipolo, Rubina Floodway Market, Rubina Green Land Market
Itlog*	P4/piraso	Mutya ng Pasig, Kadiwa Center/Commonwealth Market, Pritil Public Market, Dagohoy Market, Mandaluyong Public Market, Muñoz Market
Bangus*	P120	Mutya ng Pasig, New C.1 Market, Commonwealth Market, Marikina Market Zone, Pritil Public Market, City Market of Antipolo, Bacoor Public Market, Muñoz Market, Pritil Market
"Tilapia"	P80	Mutya ng Pasig, Muntinlupa Public Market, New C.1 Market, Commonwealth Market, Marikina Public Market, Mega-Q Mart, Pritil Public Market, New Alayan Market, Muñoz Market, Pritil Market
Ampalaya	P60	Pasong Market, Muntinlupa Public Market, Kadiwa Center, New C.1 Market, Commonwealth Market, Marikina Market Zone, Bacoor Public Market
Repolyo	P25 • 30	Mutya ng Pasig, Viazro Market, Muntinlupa Public Market, South Station, Kadiwa Center, New C.1 Market, Commonwealth Market, Mega-Q Mart, Mayapyo Market, Pritil Public Market, City Market of Antipolo
Karot	P40	Mutya ng Pasig, Viazro Market, Muntinlupa Public Market, South Station, Kadiwa Center, New C.1 Market, Commonwealth Market, Mega-Q Mart, Mayapyo Market, Pritil Public Market, City Market of Antipolo, Bacoor Public Market, Dagohoy Market, Polo Market
Kamatis	P40 • 60	Mutya ng Pasig, Viazro Market, Muntinlupa Public Market, South Station, Kadiwa Center, New C.1 Market, Mayapyo Market, Pritil Public Market, Marikina Public Market, Marikina Market Zone, Rubina Floodway Market, Bacoor Public Market
Sibuyas (puti)	P70 • 75	Pasong Market, Muntinlupa Public Market, South Station, Kadiwa Center, New C.1 Market, Mayapyo Market, Pritil Public Market, Marikina Market Zone, Rubina Floodway Market, Bacoor Public Market, Dagohoy Market, Marikina Long Market, New Alayan Market
Talong	P30 • 35	Kadiwa Center, New C.1 Market, Mayapyo Market, Pritil Public Market, Marikina Public Market, Marikina Market Zone, Rubina Floodway Market, Bacoor Public Market, City Market of Antipolo

Isang proyekto nina Pangalawang Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at kalihim Arthur C. Yap sa pakikipagtulungan sa mga pinuno ng lokal, pamahalaang bayan at pribadong sektor

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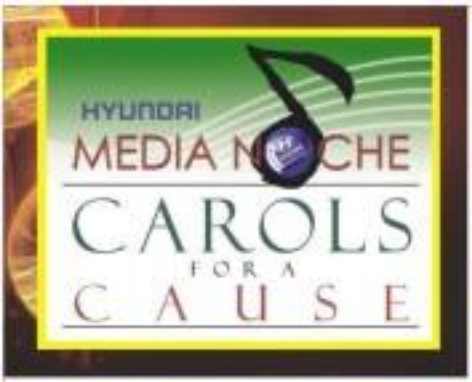

The cause for celebration

A campaign formally introduced by HARI to its media partners in December 2007, the Hyundai Media Noche Choral Festival is aimed at bringing together the best singers from the media and in turn, lead the way in bringing good tidings to society's underprivileged and channel the charitable initiatives of HARI Foundation, Inc., the socio-civic arm of HARI. Aside from the prizes awarded for the three major winners of the competition, the Grand Champion is also entitled to extend help to their chosen charitable institution. From the contest arena, the Grand Champion will sing their winning piece at selected Hyundai dealers in Metro Manila and the total amount of cash tokens they get in return will be duplicated by HARI and will be donated to the group's favorite charity.

During the first Hyundai Media Noche choral competition held recently at Teatrino in Promenade, Greenhills, a total of five choral groups vied for the title of Grand Champion: World News, Business Mirror, Gadgets Magazine, GMA Network, Inc., and Philippine Daily Inquirer—each one with a mission to share their voice for a selfless and benevolent cause, in the hope of forwarding support to Home for the Aged, Home for the Angels, RockEd Philippines, GMA Kapuso Foundation, and The Breakfast Club by Hands On Manila, respectively.

Representatives from Hyundai Motor Company, the financial sector, HARI's dealer network community, and the Korean Embassy, led by Ambassador Choi Joong-Kyung, also graced the occasion and expressed their optimism toward HARI's initiatives for social awareness and corporate social responsibility. The ceremonial toast led by Ambassador Choi Joong-Kyung further emphasized the strong ties of Korea and the Philippines that will hopefully, both countries endeavor to develop more charitable programs to benefit the underprivileged and encourage the expansion of socio-economic projects.

Trumpets opened the festivities with a medley of Christmas songs, including five all-time favorite, "Give Love on Christmas Day," which tirelessly described the occasion's theme of generosity. The uplifting melodies of hope and prosperity continued with the grand choral experience of World News, Business Mirror, Gadgets Magazine, GMA Network, Inc., and the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Each performance had a unique story to share and demonstrated each group's desire, not only to win the top award, but to rest the cause of uplifting the lives of those they've chosen and aimed to share their blessings to

And HARI announced that
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GMA Kapuso Foundation

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Bringing families together this Christma

Season's greetings from Hyundai's Legendary

Grand Starex

HYUNDAI

HARI Foundation, Inc.: Championing Charity

Driving its way to campaign social awareness and responsibility, the HARI Foundation, Inc. (HFI) explores various socio-civic groups in the pursuit of enriching the well-being and entrepreneurial spirit of the Filipino. By partnering with Gawad Kalinga (GK), HFI has helped rehabilitate calamity-stricken areas, rebuild communities, and donate schools.

The 53rd School in Liloan, Southern Leyte is one of four schools sponsored by HFI. HFI extended its support to Gawad Kalinga in 2006 following the massive landslide tragedy in Southern Leyte. With the help of the Hyundai dealer network, the HFI generated 3 million pesos and donated this to GK to finance the construction of a GK 53rd School in Leyte, as well as other 53rd schools in other GK communities in Nueva Vizcaya, Camarines Sur, and Bacolod City in Negros.

Aside from its sponsorship of GK schools, HFI also graciously extended its support to GK through its donation of 2 units of Hyundai Porter. The handover ceremony of the said vehicles held this year at HARI's national headquarters along Gen. Gil Puyat Ave. in Makati City, opened up a rare opportunity for HARI and Gawad Kalinga to renew their ties as partners in nation building and forerunners of societal transformation. The vehicle donation is HARI's response to Gawad Kalinga's intent to further intensify its campaign to provide shelter and develop sustainable communities in the Visayas and Mindanao regions. The Hyundai Porter units are intended to help GK kickstart its operations during the GK Bayani Challenge in Bukidnon and Lanao del Sur, as well as other community projects in the Visayas region. HARI also joined the GK Bayani Challenge through its Mindanao-based relationship, Hyundai Cagayan de Oro (HCDO). With the Hyundai Porter ably assisting in mobilizing the participants during the event, HCDO, along with the rest of the GK community and team of volunteers, headed the call to heroism by actively participating in GK Bayani Challenge activities, where hope and inspiration were brought to families in various GK sites in Bukidnon and Lanao del Sur.

HFI's tie-up with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) on the other hand has paved the way for HARI's PRO Negosyo Movement that helps revitalize the business of small-medium enterprises through quality and affordable Hyundai vehicles.

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OPINION

Forward, march

EDITORIAL

IN HINDSIGHT, THE FIRST TRUE SIGN THAT THE presidency of Joseph Estrada was in significant trouble surfaced about 14 months before former class mate Luis "Chavit" Singson starred in the "Sumbungero" hearings in the Senate. On Aug. 21, 1998, the biggest crowd since the 1986 elections gathered at the famous corner of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas in the middle of Makati City to lambaste new attempts to amend the Constitution, protest the Estrada administration's creeping cronyism and denounce insidious assaults on press freedom.

Jaime Cardinal Sin, in 1986 the field marshal of the Edsa millions, rallied us the faithful in 1998 to "protect our democracy," and as many as 100,000 responded. Many journalists were among the demonstrators, because of the administration-engineered sale of the Manila Times and the advertising boycott aimed at crippling the Inquirer. Amando Doronila then wrote: "The extraordinary thing about the rally in Makati today is that it marks a very early politicization and polarization of the Filipino people in the 5th of this government."

These thoughts return to mind because of the nature of today's protest rally, which will again be held at the Edsa insurrection site in the heart of Makati. Like 1998's, this year's demonstration is both widely multi-sectoral and church-organized; like that previous one, today's manifestors will lose their lunch wearing street parliamentarian and Catholic school students; like that last protest, today's rally can easily be misread by politicians in Malacañang as a one-day wonder, a loud but necessary release of the social pressure valve.

In fact, that August action helped send the ground for those who would, in time, come out with the damning evidence against Estrada to lead the fight against him, including Sen. Teofisto Guingona, Singson and many more anti-erstwhere who testified at the impeachment trial at great risk.

Presidents Macapagal-Arroyo and her allies should surely know enough history to learn how not to trample the flowers. But Spielder Prospero Nograles, perhaps because his own, self-erroneous hold on power in the House of Representatives is determined by the President's support, has turned his back on his own experiences in the parliament of the streets.

"Only members of Congress can vote on these measures and they may possibly be influenced by the public outcry. But the demonstrations on the streets and its leaders cannot vote for or against Cha-cha (Charter change). It's the vote of congressmen and senators that will count. Not the streets," Nograles said in a text message.

Technically, he is correct: it is the congressmen and senators who will cast their vote for or against the latest attempt to fast-track Charter change. But unless the republican nature of our government has been changed (and we together with everyone else did not get the memo), it is ultimately the people who will decide. Not only in the dramatic, twice-told tale of a people-powered revolt, but also in the simple legislative sense that the vote of congressmen and senators will have to be ratified by the people.

Nograles belittles today's gathering by stating the distance between congressional initiative and public opinion wider than it appears (or is, in democratic theory). As ever, he grudgingly admits that legislators "may possibly be influenced by the public outcry" (note the double tentative). He can be sure, however, that if the administration coalition's attempt to amend the Constitution were popular, we would hear precisely the opposite argument. In fact, that's exactly what happened two years ago, when the administration, through the ministrations of Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno, tried to generate a popular ground swell for Charter change, through the ill-fated (and manufactured) people's initiative. Now that the surveys are clear about the unpopularity of Charter change, administration congressmen have rediscovered the gospel of independent agency: they are representatives of the people, yet, but they were elected to act independently.

The issue of Charter change, however, threatens the body politic with the prospect of an extension, by whatever disguise, of the President's grip on power. And on this issue, most administration congressmen, from Nograles on down, are not acting independently, but taking their cue from Malacañang.

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Across the SBMA and into the trees

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY (SBMA) is quite in the news in a green because of a hotel to be constructed by another Korean company. The SBMA has been criticized because Filipino workers are dying in the construction site of Korean shipbuilder Hanjin within the SBMA. This time the problem is over environmental concerns and corruption.

Based on Subic Bay Commissioner Jose Ndalila, a bidder for consultancy services for the proposed Ocean 9 Casino Hotel project inside the SBMA, told the press last week that his company got out of the project because more than 300 trees stood in the "construction site." In the project site would be cut. The newspapers also reported that "an executive of the state-controlled SBMA had asked his (Subic) firm for an 18-percent commission in exchange for the official getting them on the short list of bidders for a previous project involving the freeport's resort in Morong, Bataan." Ndalila, the guest of us saying, "We refused it because it went against the core values of honesty and transparency." The company was disqualified.

Going by this statement, SBMA Administrator Armand Arreza went to the Sangkiat on Manila Bay Marina Resort in Kapitbisig as to the previous franchise) to refuse the allegations. In the first place, Arreza said, not one tree had been cut, as will be cut, for the Korean-owned casino-hotel. He said they have directed the developer, Grand Utopia Inc., "to either encompass the trees in the design of development plan, or find them in relocation."

Although the developer applied for a new trimming and relocation permit last Nov. 26, not one tree has been cut or moved to this day, Arreza said. This application is still under review.

In the second place, Arreza continued, there are no centuries-old trees in the project site. He said they made an inventory of trees from Bataan to October 2008, and counted 969 trees in the area. Classified according to their size, the trees consisted of 26 seedlings, 117 saplings with girths of 6 to 30 cm, 69 poles with girths of 31-50 cm, and 107 trees measuring 51 cm and above. "Only seven trees in the area have girths beyond one meter," he said. "Moreover, geological studies conducted at the project site indicate that the area was reclaimed by the City Navy from swampland in the 1950s and 1960s. This finding makes it impossible for the area to be the location of century-old trees."

Allegations of attempted extortion are unfounded, he said. But the truth is that the bidders from area was disqualified. One of the 12 companies that participated in the bidding, Ndalila and his partners were among the seven that qualified. Among them, only three firms, including Ndalila's, submitted technical and financial proposals, the basis for the final results. Ndalila, however, ship ordinance seven grade, Ndalila only ranked second. Another firm was declared the winner.

The SBMA asked Ndalila to identify the persons who delivered the extortion message but the latter refused to cooperate, Arreza said. "We are not trying to investigate but we have nothing to go by."

The SBMA administrator intimated that Ndalila is a sore loser and "invented" the extortion story. Why else is he not cooperating?

As I see it, the fact that Ndalila refuses to name the person who delivered the message that the extortion attempt did not happen. As the saying goes, silence (here's sounds, there's fire. Considering what has been going on in this government, it is not hard to believe another extortion attempt. There are so many enemies, known to the Arroyo administration. This government is going out in one year and officials are probably panicking for their future.

So why is Ndalila just commenting? Can you blame him? He has seen what happened to whistle-blowers, notably Jun Lozada and now Jo Arreza. If who exposed the ZTE NBN deal are, Then there is the fertilizer fund scam and the looming bribery scandal. After lengthy investigations, the accused are still here on lands and it is the whistle-blowers who are now being harassed. With such precedent, we can't blame Ndalila for deciding that prudence is the better part of valor.

This is not to say that the extortion story is true either. It is possible there was a few lesser who tried to pull a fast one. That has happened before. A recent case was a bus lawyer who was able to get P5 million from Pagcor on the pretext that it was for a Manila government foundation. The scam was discovered by Pagcor auditors and fired, however, and the free-lesser is now having charges.

As for the trees, the persons that were in the SBMA handouts showed that some trees on the hotel-construction site are really small, but there are also big ones. They may not be centuries-old, but they are certainly big and many years old. The term "centuries-old" is a mere figure of speech. When Filipinos are a big tree, their either mean it to describe it as "centuries-old."

As for "bulling" them, and not "killing" them, this may be hair-splitting. The Philippines is good at "bulldozing" and relocating big trees is very poor. The trees often die. Look at the trees that used to grow along some of Manila's streets. They were "bulled" and relocated by the SBMA and the DPWH, but few survived. "Bulling" is often interpreted by skeptics as "bulldozing" instead of "relocating" environmentalists without saving trees.

And modern architecture now incorporates nature and the environment into the plans. Even now grow inside homes and hotel lobbies. Haven't they heard of Frank Lloyd Wright's "Falling Waters"?

Damaged institutions protect the damagers

PASSION FOR REASON

René C. Pangalangan

THE MOST LASTING LEGACY OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo, the Philippines' equivalent of George W. Bush, is the destruction of our institutions of government. She took the elaborate systems of checks and balances over public administration and perverted them to cover up, stonewall and frustrate every attempt by citizens to hold her accountable. In the words of the UN special rapporteur on extra-judicial killings (and his words can very well apply to her own abuses and corruption), "[T]he accountability mechanisms ... were paper. They were moving in practice, they are all too little use, and often flies in the midst of official design."

Mr. Arroyo has shown devotion to the cunning manipulation of millions of peso bills, as the Senate committee unpeached. It is already trying to go down the ever-growing list: the AFP construction scandal (which has $300,000 in undisclosed cash hard we would have looked the other way had it not been for the ID Corporation embezzlement), the "euro generals" with 1,911,000 euros in travel funds (spent unreported, had it not been for the President), the $329 million NBN deal with ZTE in China (almost forgotten, but for our witness Jun Lozada), the 05 million in cash given by a Mandaluyong lawyer to Jun Lozada (where Lozada was about to testify against Arroyo (from my own private funds, the lawyer claimed, and partly out of the goodness of my heart), the Hardball scam (exposed by the Senate, but almost forgotten but for ZTE), the P1.5 million fund heist given away to the governors inside Malacañang during a breakfast meeting with the President ("but from us!" they said), the P5 million heist given away to the congressmen a few days later (I don't even recall the explanation here), and now the P728 million fertilizer fund diverted to her presidential campaign.

Witness the secretary before the Senate hearing as it dismissed the robbery and graft charges against Mr. Arroyo's first secretary of justice, Hernando Perez. A prosecutor's office that has hydrochloric contract was born during the formula years for concerns that it was dissolved upon its completion. Mr. Arroyo's first secretary of justice, Hernando Perez. A prosecutor's office that has hydrochloric contract was born during the formula years for concerns that it was dissolved upon its completion.

Impeachment is the Philippines. Mr. Arroyo was elected as president in January 2001, after a popular uprising against corruption, and in a few days, Erap signed on. In August 2001, the Ombudsman filed graft charges against Mr. Arroyo and others. But Congress, which has the power to impeach the Ombudsman, was slow in filing the charges against Perez? In other words, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, who was Perez's former deputy in the justice department, dropped her boss in prosecuting her former boss. And now it is precisely Perez who has the power in initiating the case altogether. (Whew). She finds (perhaps) found that some of the charges had been deliberately written, and that it failed to complete the "factual-material allegations" needed for Congress to prosecute Perez under the 1987 Senate Impeachment Rules.

And we haven't even discussed the wanton killings of Arroyo-litmus activists and of journalists. In the words of the UN special rapporteur, the government is in a "state of almost total denial ... it seems unwilling to take any effective measures to end the culture of impunity." Or of responsibility by the government."

So who stands to lose if the constitutional term limits are maintained? For President Arroyo, it means that by 2010, she will lose her hood of state immunity under international law and her presidential immunity under national law. She will have to answer for all her liabilities, not before an impeachment body where congressmen are for sale, but before the courts where, hopefully, the judges will no longer be afraid of incurring presidential ire.

Please, she will have her name to hands, guilty or innocent, with which to betray the loyalties of her former minions. Her three must be some how charge left over from all these scandals. But just as surely she has seen the congressmen dump their former reps, she fall. On October 2009, she failed to open whose public-ral version his former lieutenants learned after he fell out of grace with the Palace.

Surely Mr. Arroyo has seen how former presidents Marcos Joseph and Estrada have charged and jailed. In South Korea, Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo (the former's grandson remains incarcerated), in Taipei, Chen Shui-bian, his wife, son, daughter-in-law and brother-in-law (for using "diplomatic state funds", diverting campaign funds, and money laundering), in Thailand, Thaksin Shinawatra and his wife (for conflict of interest, for running the government agency from which he) with fought and jailed.

The only bright star for the Arroyos is Indonesia, where Suharto with an estimated $15 billion to $35 billion in ill-gotten wealth (internationally, the richest leader ever) managed (after months of house arrest and eventually acquittal). His son Tommy was convicted for having arranged the killing of a judge who had sentenced him to jail for a land scam, but Tommy is now free on "conditional release." Another son Probosutedjo was sentenced for a $570-million scam, but got his sentence reduced (through $600,000 bribes to the judges, which he himself admitted). It was only this year that the government used its seizure $440-million from the soldier public fund plus $1.2 billion in damages from the Suharto family. In other words, they continue to profit from the institutions they debased.

For the Suhartos and Arroyos, damaging institutions institutions is a continuing investment.

• • •

Comments to pasionforreason@gmail.com

RP faces full fury of financial crisis

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

FILIPINOS WILL START TO FEEL THE COLD, erratic effects of the global financial crisis by 2009, a World Bank economist warned on Wednesday, with the gross domestic product (GDP) expected to grow by only 3 percent. "What, until recently for most Filipinos, were remote and abstract news reports could soon become all too real," Bill Maloney, country director for the Philippine Unit in Bangkok said in a news briefing that was part of the semiannual East Asia and Pacific Update, titled "Navigating the Perfect Storm." The bank said Philippine GDP growth this year is expected to remain flat, which is "sharply lower than the 7.2 percent recorded in 2007."

Because of the global crisis, its bongga said, the Philippines will likely see more unemployment next year and severer remittances from overseas will "come under pressure." Or, said the Philippines would have "strong headwinds" in the fight against poverty, which was already tough early this year due to ongoing prices of fuel and commodities.

The warning was the blunt-est ever made by an international economic institution on the impact of the financial crisis on the Philippines as well as on non-Southeast Asian countries. But if the warning to the Filipinos, there was little sign as they were riveted on the unfolding political scene of constitutional change. The issue occupies the topmost attention of the Philippine media, with the focus on the budding confrontation between the House of Representatives headed by Speaker Prospero Nograles on the banner issue of "Hands-off on Charter change," in its Thursday edition. The financial crisis seemed too remote and abstract, as most dailies buried the World Bank report in their business sections, although the financial crisis has had more impact on the daily lives of the Filipinos than political issues.

This picture of news emphasis relative to political and economic news reveals the astonishing passion of Filipinos with politics. To be sure, the politics have been galvanizing news about the economy in the wake of the financial meltdown that many

In its conservative summary, the Update said that as the global economy finds itself in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, the East Asia and Pacific Region "has not been spared the full fury of the economic storm. The surge and subsequent drop in food and fuel prices were followed by the intensification in the financial crisis that began in September 2008 in the United States, and took a sharp turn for the worse after Sept. 15. Even as the last batch of indicators now lending the previous crisis is late 2007 and early 2008—the rise in inflation following the steep increase in food and fuel prices, the widening current account deficits, sharp asset and exchange rate drops, drops increases in short-term interest rates, and abrupt deceleration in export growth."

The epicenter of the storm was in the developed countries, but it spread quickly across the globe, said the report.

In its country report, the Update said Philippine economic growth slowed in 2008 following the stronger pace of economic expansion in three decades in 2007. Real GDP growth slowed to 4.6 percent in the first semester, compared to 7.3 percent in 2007 as a whole. Government spending and investment remained in the first half of the year, but stagnated significantly in the third quarter. "Despite these challenges, the economy is expected to remain resilient, although growth is projected to slow substantially" this year, it said.

The slowdown in growth set back poverty amelioration in the region. It said that in the short term, "the slower pace of economic growth will rob some of the three-off East Asia's earlier record in poverty reduction."

The Update said: "Where the number of poor in the region will continue to decline, the expected slowdown in GDP growth will mean that about 114 million people are now likely to escape poverty from 2005 through 2008, compared to the 119.6 million we had projected in our previous economic update, or 5.6 million fewer."

So much, so little

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

AT AN ANTI-CORRUPTION CONFIDENCE EMILEE THIS week, I suggested that more attention should be given to the way corruption takes away what citizens are entitled to. This means that even a small amount of money lost through graft and corruption can mean a lot, given a context where funds are scarce.

For example, charging P500 for a non-existent vaccine may seem small—unless you think of how that P500 could have been used. That P500 could have paid for some portion of a public utility bill, a balance to transport a sick patient from a remote town to a hospital. (I actually saw this happen some years back, when I was with a group of anthropology students in Central, Bohol, and one of them broke his leg playing basketball. Fortunately, the town had an ambulance that took us to Tagbilaran, where my student received the necessary medical care.)

Last Oct. 31 the Inquirer published the government's financial statements, including assets and liabilities, incomes and expenditures. These are compiled annually by the Commission on Audit (COA) from the financial statements submitted to the Treasurer's business section and I suspect most readers probably skipped these tables, lost to a researcher like my self: they are a gold mine of information. Mainly, I thought of doing this column to show how much it costs to run the country. The title of my column, "so much, so little" describes the many paradoxes of government finances.

I cannot promise that my study questions can be intimidating or lost, so I'm going to be very selective with the numbers, and will be rounding them off; for example, the inquirer lumped assets of P2,323,555,988,888.94 will be more readable simply as P2 trillion. (Math teachers can use these figures to practice their students' computation skills of millions, billions, trillions. Maybe in the future we'll be dealing with x-illions.)

P5,400 per Filipino

Let's look first at the big picture, meaning the financial activities of the national government. According to the COA statements, the national government had a total income of P1.180 trillion in 2007, with tax collections accounting for P912 billion.

How much did it cost for the national government to operate? Only P486 billion, which means about P5,400 per Filipino if we use a population of 90 million. (Want to compare that sum with how much you pay in sales taxes and income taxes?) The bulk of expenses, P384 billion, went to personnel services (i.e., salaries), followed by P102 billion. It seems that the government actually had a net income of P675 billion, P171 billion of which was then passed on to subsidies of various national government agencies, local government units, government corporations and NGOs.

These amounts may seem huge, but we're actually quite "thrifty" when it comes to the cost of government in developed countries. The Brookings Institute in the States estimates that in 2008, the war in Iraq cost US taxpayers some $113 billion a month. That's about P600 billion, more than the total operating costs of our national government for the entire year in 2007.

The COA financial statements include a breakdown by government agency with assets, liabilities, income and expenditures. I've already mentioned the Bangko Sentral's assets, which shouldn't be surprising since it is, after all, a bank. Besides government banks, other agencies with huge assets include the Bureau of Treasury (where all government securities are issued), the Bureau of Customs (Customs acquires of more than P1 trillion), the Social Security System with P247 billion, and the Home Development Mutual Fund with P161 billion.

What government agencies' assets are more modest, meaning in a few million pesos, but the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) is still charged with assets of P4.948 billion, most probably sequestered from Marcos cronies. The P16 billion figure does make me wonder when those assets will be used for, well, good government.

Operating expenses can raise some eyebrows. For example, Congress spent P1.1 billion and the Office of the President P4 billion.

Agencies with teachers are priorities (best students' division skills using these financial statements). Given the operating costs of the following departments: Health, P13.9 billion; Social Welfare, P3.6 billion; Science and Technology, P2.3 billion; Environment and Natural Resources, P6.8 billion; Defense, P94.3 billion; and the Office of Senior Citizens (translate in terms of expenditures per Filipino senior citizen), P2 billion.

To complicate matters a bit, the Department of Education's expenditures of P129 billion would have to be compared based on the number of students. I don't have the numbers offhand but one could look not just at enrolled students but also the entire population of young people who should be in school. Or even better, because of poverty, the number of corruption siphoning away already scarce resources.

One thing is clear: no. Most government agencies have to continue to be subsidized. The University of the Philippines, for example, had revenues of P1.3 billion, mainly through tuition fees, but this is a long way off from the P4.3 billion in operating costs.

LGUs

The financial statements also included local government units (LGUs), down to the city and municipal level. On one hand, you can see how some local governments have quite large assets, and income. The "richest" province in Isabela with assets of P1.3 billion, followed by Cebu province (second to Quezon City's P9 billion and Manila's P3.3 billion), Iloilo, Cebu City with assets of P1.2 billion, is richer than Cebu Province, with P1.1 billion.

Quezon City also has the highest gross income among LGUs, totaling P8.4 billion, followed by Makati with P6.2 billion.

The richest municipality is Tubigon, Bohol, with P1.2 billion. The lowest incomes reported were for Mangudadatu in Maguindanao with P9.12 million; Senator Ninoy, Tarlac, with P8.18 million; Sunday, Maguindanao, with P9.46 million; and Talitay, Tawi-tawi, with P11 million. These figures are lower than the income of many corporations or even of individuals.

Those figures don't seem much for a province, a city or municipality, there aren't much left. Salaries eat first, and end up with P25,000, and Mangudadatu, Maguindanao with P90,000.

The COA assessment call as there's so much out there that can be tapped in terms of assets and tax collections. The COA statements tell us, too, that until plenty many government agencies are in dire need of money to carry out the day-to-day activities. I keep thinking of doctors fielded in very poor towns, working on a budget of P5 million for the entire year, serving populations of 10,000 to 50,000 people. It's not easy, but they manage.

It takes to-little, even when there's so much to do. It takes so little to make a big difference in people's lives. What is why graft and corruption, even involving the smallest amounts, threaten all the basic ideas.

* * *

Email: mtan@inquirer.com.ph

Father and son

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

Reading a small closet-size room to another disney is a 16-year-old looking after her infant. "Yes it's living in look after a child," she says, the fatigue in her eyes obvious. "I have to nurse, and can't sleep because of it."

Another consequence of early sexuality is shown inside the health center, where two youths have come seeking advice and treatment for "sulo," or gonorrhea. The teenage boys speak of casual sexual encounters, sometimes with girls they've just met, and of their worry over embarrassment symptoms. Later, they explain that it's only normal for some children to react that way to the common them that they have not said any "bad" words. It's only the way people react to such words that make them embarrassing.

* * *

HOWEL that moves to another setting, to a barangay in Malabon, especially an area that is called, with some irony, "Paradise." It is indeed a paradise—of children—including **mothers and married mothers who are little more than children themselves.**

There is a 13-year-old, already visibly pregnant, who confesses that she had only the

request idea about sex and pregnancy when she became sexually active. Her father confesses that he found it embarrassing to instruct her about sex, and so his children, obviously rising his daughter's fate.

Bonding a small closet-size room to another disney is a 16-year-old looking after her infant. "Yes it's living in look after a child," she says, the fatigue in her eyes obvious. "I have to nurse, and can't sleep because of it."

Another consequence of early sexuality is shown inside the health center, where two youths have come seeking advice and treatment for "sulo," or gonorrhea. The teenage boys speak of casual sexual encounters, sometimes with girls they've just met, and of their worry over embarrassment symptoms. Later, they explain that it's only normal for some children to react that way to the common them that they have not said any "bad" words. It's only the way people react to such words that make them embarrassing.

* * *

FIELDING young people from ignorance and its consequences is what motivates Educator Tonya, a youth instructor and organizer for Likhaan, an NGO that works among the urban poor communities of Malabon. Himself the product of an early marriage ("My mother was 23 when she married, and 15 when she had me," he says), Kiko devotes his time conducting discussions among young people about sexuality and reproduction.

Howie brings Abu along to one such discussion, which a frank and inspiring in its details, complete with graphic photos of different forms of sexually transmitted infections.

In fact, Howie's presence at one point in adding himself if he had not already "learned" his young child by exposing him to such tempting talk about sex. But when he later talks privately

At a parent who has navigated the shoals of sexuality education, I think both the lower and bridges think me lowly of our children. We have to give them some credit for common sense, if not for self-control. We have to trust that they have learned from our behavior and filter it through their own experience. And as "Teacher Rina" says, it's all a matter of placing things in perspective. When talking about intercourse, for instance, she always places it in the context of a loving relationship, where out of such intimacy can flow new life.

Howie ends the episode by stating the heated **debates on the Reproductive Health** Bill now pending in Congress, especially the portion of the bill that mandates age-appropriate sexuality education, but he concludes that if government, schools and churches will not provide sexuality education to young people, then every parent will have to step into the breach. But as Howie proves, even the best-motivated, well-informed parent needs some help. Even professionals and teachers, community organizers and health caregivers.

Howie's parting words to me: "Sir, I don't exaggerate. I'm a good parent, I'm a good teacher, I'm a good citizen! But I'm the father of Moro's education and safeguarding is beyond hands.

* * *

Comments are welcome at rsjimenez@inquirer.com.ph

Historical research made easy

LOOKING BACK

Sandwich & Gramps

ONE OF THE JOYSES OF MY LIFE IS THAT I have to read for a living. I have to read old books and documents for work, but I am allergic to book dust. There are many kinds of dust in our daily lives, and I have to be allergic in the very source of my livelihood.

Nobody pinpointed the source of the goings that gave in my sinuses until I had endured seven operations. Aside from surgery, there were other solutions like steroids that everyone warned me was bad for the health and could help me grow breasts. Then there were anti-histamines that made me sleep all day, and there was the use of a machine to wash that dust out but would rot it in a hurry or activated coughing.

One of my specialists once went over Jim Hicks's medical notebooks and showed me a polypectomy he performed when he was a resident. Hubs told, I wanted to know if Hicks would have cancer and if he was my ancestor. The polypectomy took a long more short, the surgery was successful but the patient expired seven hours after the operation. I was told Hicks used a procedure slightly different from that in his textbooks, and if the patient survived recall he could thumb his papers. Hicks was a country doctor who had no medical library and would probably have been known as the "final procedure" or something. I would like to think medicine and human knowledge progress when someone succeeds by doing something a different way—but you don't be the casualty.

Now, as other researchers have been doing in book dust is this: as a Filipino historian, I have to do research on Philippine history in libraries and archives abroad. So much material exists! Filipinos researchers in the United States and Spain. I am sure there is more elsewhere: in Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Peru, Portugal and Germany. And Chile without a bibliographer assembled an important collection of Philippine books at the turn of the 19th century.

Nearly "bok on paper" and "El Filibusterismo" and the most complete illustrated biography "Life Lineage and Labors of Jose Rizal" by Austin Craig.

Much more comprehensive and important for scholarly research is the University of Michigan website that lists a dedicated place for "The University Series and its Treasures." Michigan has a lot of Filipiniana and its treasures. Theses and archives and its most important books have been digitized and placed online. All the early dictionaries of Philippine languages compiled by Spanish friars are available: Tagalog, Bicolano, Visayan, etc. Books that are not available except in specialized libraries in Manila can be consulted and downloaded for free.

Last but not least is the US Library of Congress that has a dedicated page called "American History" that dwells on US history. Just type "Philippines" in the search box and so many items come up: books, pamphlets, photographs, including early films of Thomas Edison on the Filipino-American War. There is no excuse for a history or social science teacher these days to be ill-prepared for class. All it takes is some curiosity and drive. The Internet has made the world a smaller place, which is why schools library is a thing of the past. Almost everything is available online, so you can borrow a book even before you make a visit to the place. Sometimes that book can even be made available online.

There is a website called "Project Gutenberg" that has so many out-of-print and rare Philippine titles available online. These can be downloaded for free, like the classic Forbesian translations of

Forgetting Christ in a manger

IN THESE HARD TIMES, MANY still continue to flaunt their wealth even in this season of concern. Even scandalous is our fascination of the "haves" with regard to conspicuously decorated all over with Christmas lights and décor materials. The image of our Savior born in a humble manger is replaced with those of Santa Claus and other characters. This is the image that is being installed in many young minds onto Christmas.

If the intention for such grand display is to bring cheer to the poor, it is, I believe, a misplaced sense of goodwill, for they remain among the poor heritage of envy, jealousy, self-pity and even hate feelings toward God for not blessing them just as much.

Jesus chose to be born poor and lived humbly. His message to us men is clear. Live simply avoid excesses, moderate your greed. Let us celebrate Christmas more in the eternity of the spirit than in predictable materialistic things.

—THERESA PEL-AQUITANA,
2604 Juan Luna,
Sagalongos, Tondo, Manila

Yes, they're the best—that people's money can buy

IT REALLY WOULD AMOUNT TO millions of Filipinos if it were accepted that the incumbent members of Congress are the best and the brightest to do the sweeping of the Commission. They are, indeed, the best and the brightest, as reputed, to be "the best that money can buy."

Think of it! Knowing their reputation, how can they properly review the Constitution when they and their institution have to be reformed and changed? Are they afraid that their perceived and political interests will be affected if they oversee the writing of the Constitution to an independent and freely elected convention?

Let us not waste our time entrapping these people to change and reform a decrepit political system that they are part of and that they are enjoying at the expense of the people.

A constitutional convention (Con-con) is a better mode than a constituent assembly (Con-ass), but not yet. Transition time is needed to clean up the mess and dirt that the hyper have brought into our political system. Time is needed to forty-out people across the bridge of transition from a dysfunctional governance to a new sound political order.

—RIO CES. FERTIDANTE
U. ABAD (Ret.),
fortunatoabad@yahoo.com

LETTERS

Thanks for fine PDI journalism

THIS IS IN REACTION TO Ashis Mustafi's column titled "The Qiu stratten, who's listening?" (Inquirer, 12/6/'03).

Let the Think Mustard for the courage to publish—and to continue to publish—the material regarding the tax evasion of the "rajpati." It is—and has been for long—a scandal how the rich and well-connected swad paying their taxes.

As the old saying goes...for the rich, paying the income tax is optional. To Mustard, do keep the "courageous" going.

With thanks and utmost respect for media line journalism.

—CELSO MONTENEGRO,
41 Ralrich Crescent,
Saratoga, NSW, Australia 2251

If you have any complaints, your comments or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue extension, Makati, Metro Manila, or e-mail reader'sadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are required to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Charges vs Villar not a rehashed case

THE EXPERT TO THE INSPECTION titled "Villars file plunder raps vs Villars" (Inquirer, 9/29/'03). The editorial stated "But inquirer say charges a rehash of one dismissed by Ombudsman."

Villars to set clearly that the two claimants referred to in the article as a "farmers group," namely, Ursua Arsenia and Valentina Amadeo are (and were) not farmers in the disputed Outlands. In fact, they belong to a group being used to stop the genuine farmers' group's basic filing a case against spouses Sen. Manuel Villar and Rep. Cyn. this Villar in connection with the landmark in question.

In December 2000, we found out that our farmlands were among those mortgaged by the Villars to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. We learned of this after discovering in the Registry of Deeds that our title to the farmlands had been recalled by officials of Imus and Cavite City. Also. On connection with this, we have filed a case with the Ombudsman against these government officials.

Later, we learn Senator Villar regarding the farmlands, but he ignored us. So, four months ago, we filed a case with the Ombudsman against the Villars. Until now, we are still waiting for an order requiring the Villars to submit their counter-affidavit. It is not true, therefore, for them to say that the charges are a rehash of a dismissed case.

The Villars got P2.8 billion; their spokesperson said the amount was P1.7 billion only; while the report said it was P1.5 billion. Whichever is the correct figure, there still would be an overprice, given the fact that the assessed value of the property in question was only P5/sq m at the time of purchase. Multiply land area (7,150,000 sq m) by P5, the value of the property would be P34.2 million only.

These farmers' groups had claims to the property which include: (1) allowable and disposable lands, (2) the assorted domain claimed by Dumagatol, and (3) public forest. Not a single hectare is mentioned as owned by a Villar corporation. This point in question the statement of Rose Carreon, SEC's assistant governor for monetary operation, that the bank is still trying to thresh out the ownership questions on the property so they could sell it, possibly back to the Villars. The fact is, a conveyor hired by the Villars made a report (dated June 19, 1995) stating that there were registered claimants to the land.

We would like to ask Carreon: Why did the SEC approve the loans and collaterals? Why did he sign the Consolidation of Ownership (dated Jan. 31, 2002) declaring that the BSP bought the farmlands at an auction sale for only P26,136,2007 What he aware that the GSIS conducted an investigation upon a complaint of the farmers' community, which led to the filing of a petition for annulment of the title of Manila Bitchumbo Inc. for being false?

Manila Bitchumbo Inc. was dissolved 35 years ago. How can it sell an mortgage in behalf of the Villars? On the other hand, how can lawyer Salvador Medina, who represents Arsenia and Amadeo, say that Capitol Bank, which was sold to BSP, Savings Bank on Aug. 23, 1998, is now Optimum Development Bank?

—JESUS CAMPUSANO,
ROBERT TORRES,
MIGUEL TORRES

Joc-joc deserving of admiration

THE FILIPINO PEOPLE SHOULD admire Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante, a former undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture. He is one guy who's willing to destroy his own name (whatever is left of it) and that of his family and his children for the sake of his handler, who he thinks will stay in power forever together with him.

I learned that some relatives of his are already rising to distance themselves from the man. But people should remember that Joc-joc is not making such a sacrifice without any consideration.

—RUBEN GARCIA,
pubdic@optusnet.com.au

Across the NATION

Roadside bomb explodes on eve of Gloria's visit

COTABATO CITY—AN IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE (IED) planted by the roadside in Crossing Awang in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Shariff Kabunsuan exploded Thursday, the eve of President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to the province.

Lt. Col. Julieto Iando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said no one was injured in the 8:30 a.m. explosion.

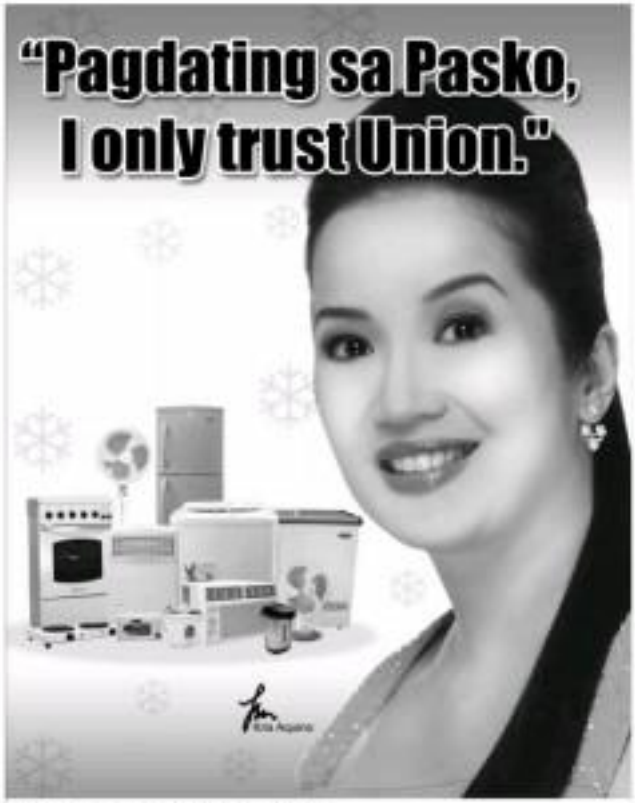
But Iando could not say if the bomb had something to do with Ms Arroyo's arrival in the province today to visit troops involved in the crackdown against rogue Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels.

Iando said the IED—fashioned out of three mortar shells—was concealed in a bag and was remotely set off.

However, Iando said the two other mortar shells that made up the IED failed to explode and were detonated later by military bomb experts.

No one has claimed responsibility for the bomb but he did not rule out the involvement of MILF rebels.

The military has been claiming that MILF rebels under Ombra Kato had been launching diversionary attacks—including bombings—to ease the pressure on other guerrillas in Maguindanao. Edwin Arnaldo and Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao



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Split-Quezon polls take toll on priest

LUCENA CITY—Tenguen Bawal in the campaign for and against the division of Quezon province, vandalizing in a parish priest in final town getting manhandled up by men campaigning for the defeat in resurrection's plebiscite of the divide-Quezon proposition.

Fr. Emeliano "Omo" Meldo, 58, said that at about 8 p.m., he was having a conversation with Brat Councilor Joel Arevalado in Infanta town proper when a guy strolled from behind and strongly slapped his left shoulder.

"I was really hurt. I asked the man why he hit me but he kept on uttering words "Ito ito, Ito ito, Traidor! Put his pa rumun," apparently referring to my personal stand on the plebiscite," Meldo said over the phone.

The Carmelite priest said the man, sporting a red-colored T-shirt of Quezon provincial government employees, also warned to "ism him no one paralyzed by his companions aboard a government vehicle.

He identified his assailant as one of the local aides of Quezon Gov. Rafael Nantes.

"A friend of mine who is also one of Governor Nantes' men helped me identify my attacker," he said.

The priest said he was in Infanta to request the management of a radio station to air an invitation for a public forum on Republic Act No. 9495 scheduled Thursday to final town.

"I support the creation of Quezon del Sur but I went my town mates to have a forum to hear both sides of the issue to enlighten them," he said.

Bishop Rolando Tria Tirona, Meldo's superior in the Prelature of Infanta, strongly condemned the act of violence inflicted on the priest.

"Such outrageous act of outright disrespect is a stain of the cloth, who is entitled to his own opinion on the plebiscite, is unacceptable," Tirona said in a text message.

Meldo lamented that a priest like him had not been spared from the lure of partisan politics, which now prevails in the hometowns of the proponents campaigning for the plebiscite on Saturday.

"And to think that it happened on Human Rights Day," he said.

Meldo reported the incident to the local police as precautionary measure for his personal safety.

He said Nantes, accompanied by Real Mayor Joel Disuvo and General Nakar Mayor Leonpablo Bunal, paid him a visit Wednesday evening and apologized.

It was learned that shortly before the attack, the priest pacified Disuvo, who accused Arevalado for using a Real government-owned vehicle on his trip to Infanta in preference to a pro-division radio debate.

"Mayor Disuvo grabbed me in my collar, seized the key of the ignite and sped off, taking with him my laptop and an estimated P50,000 which I left in the vehicle," Arevalado said over the phone.

Disuvo, a political ally of Nantes, has been zealously campaigning for the rejection of RA 9495 and is set to hold a town fest all throughout the Quezon.

Arevalado claimed that Sir trip to Infanta was official, covered with a corresponding travel letter.

Disuvo denied that he violently snatched the government vehicle from Arevalado.

"I seized the vehicle because it was being driven by a private person and being used in the plebiscite campaign. I brought the vehicle to the Infanta police station for inventory and custody," he said in a radio interview over dwRB FM in Lucena Thursday morning. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

THE CAMPAIGN for and against the division of Quezon province has produced streamers like this.

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The team from Enderun Colleges will be led by Chef See Cheong Yan, corporate culinary head. Chef See has over 20 years of experience in hotels in China and Switzerland. In the Philippines, he has led the kitchens of Edsa Shangri-La, Hyatt Regency and Tagaytay Highlands.

Together with his faculty and students, they will prepare lunch for the week for both patients and guests. They will also visit patients during the week.

For more information, please call the Food and Nutrition Department at (632) 723-0101 ext. 5612

GOVERNMENT soldiers perform gun exercises in Camp Aguinaldo, the Armed Forces of the Philippines' headquarters, in preparation for battle.

Bishop says 'gun culture' making return to Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY—CHRISTIAN TRIBAL agent in Basilan have started taking up arms as evidence involving soldiers and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels erupted early this month, Bishop Martin Jumoad said yesterday.

Jumoad said people were becoming apprehensive about the situation because it harbours that "the culture of gun is returning to Basilan."

"Children as young as 13 (years old) are now arming themselves and it's painful for me because these children are Catholics," the bishop said, citing reports from Malusu parish priest Fr. Pepe Ugasan.

Jumoad said the teenagers were arming themselves against perceived enemies, vandalizers from the villages of Cavan, Tuhilo, Maluyakay and Cabcaban in Malusu also started to flee.

"Residents are abandoning their houses, evacuating to safer areas," he said. Jumoad said he would not draw the arming until their reinstatement were the result of the residents' lack of trust in authorities.

"The reason is that security forces could no longer protect the people," he said.

But Jumoad said he would not let the arming continue and he has coordinated with the police to check on it.

He said he also sought the help of other religious organizations so that 2 dialogue would be held with the Marines.

While Christian teenagers were arming themselves against lawless groups, a human rights group in Basilan called on the military to end the war in the province.

Since Nov. 26, 11 persons—including three civilians—had already been killed in the clashes between the Marines and MILF rebels.

The clashes erupted when the Marines launched offensives against Abu Sayyaf bandits suspected of being behind the kidnapping of humanitarian workers Merlie Mendoza and Ingemarie Hapala.

Lt. Shamsir Sahidilla, head of the Jaga (Watch) Human Rights, said civilians have become the most affected by the renewed skirmishes.

But Jumoad said stopping the military offensives would again allow lawless elements to regroup and continue their activities.

"I know the security forces are after the lawless elements, I don't support their call, I believe there should be an halt in running after the lawless elements, otherwise there would be more civilian casualties and will have more time to regroup and range more illegal activities, victimizing more innocent civilians," he said.

In Manokan, Isabela del Sur, Mayor Butch Fernandez said MILF rebels have been sighted in areas that the town shares with Columbio, Sultan Kudarat and Tubcan, North Cotabato.

"The police have tightened security measures already," Fernandez said. *Julie L. Alipala with a report from Orlando C. Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

Early 'dead season' seen in sugar land

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—A MEGION OCCIDENTAL board member warned on Wednesday that a drop in sugar prices and production would trigger the early onset of the "dead season" in the industry that would take its toll on workers.

Board Member Enrique Lacson said the bad weather last year has resulted in low sugar production that could lead to the milling season ending earlier and the "dead season" in the sugar industry lasting longer.

The dead season refers to the time when there was no work on sugar cane farms. It usually starts in June and will last for three months.

Hunger in the horizon

With the current low prices of sugar, the planters would not have enough money to finance production costs for the next year and to help their workers during the off season.

"That could trigger a lot of hunger that we should brace for," Lacson said.

Without the Negros-based Aquino Administration even doing so address the low prices of sugar, we're not waiting, he said.

Lacson noted that some people in the sugar industry suspected that the "U" or world market sugar, was sold clandestinely through federated smuggling, causing an increase in the supply beyond the market requirement, thereby prices down.

"There is a need to reduce the country's allocation of 'U' sugar to address the problem," he said.

Hard times

SRA Administrator Rafael Coscolluela on Wednesday said the sugar industry should expect some hard times because of world recession.

The large sugar suppliers have bought up the sugar they need but they were being cautious because of the vulnerability of the market, Coscolluela said.

Coscolluela urged sugar producers to avoid themselves of quedan financing to ride them over to they do not have to sell their sugar at low prices and, instead, wait until the prices improve after the holidays.

He said removal of the "U" allocation of sugar would worsen the price situation. But all possible options were being discussed to find solutions to the problem, Coscolluela said.

Not MFA rule

He said the SRA would watch carefully the production trends, adding that they would come up with more crop estimates.

Coscolluela said the initial estimates showed that sugar production could decline by at least 20 percent.

He also said it would not be feasible for the National Food Authority to go into sugar buying to help the industry because it was already questioned for the huge amounts it has spent on rice price subsidies.

THE BACOLOD Cathedral became the venue for a Human Rights Day celebration earlier this week. But when the event got under way, 13 of the 15 people who had been invited to participate in the program were not present. Instead, they were represented by empty chairs bearing their names. Among those absent was Bishop Antonio Ledesma, SJ. —GREGORIO BUENAVENTURA

Rural bank branch closes temporarily in Dumaguete

By Bonnie Magallanes and Nico V. Pal
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE BANK HOLIDAY DECLARED in at least five rural banks in Cebu under the Legacy Group have sent some depositors of other rural banks into panic.

Depositors of the Rural Bank of Sulangdaku (branch in Dumaguete City rumored to resume business on Thursday only to find the bank's doors still closed after the scheduled 9 a.m. start of banking hours.

They waited for the rumored opening time of 10 a.m., but the steel rolling doors were shut. At noon, only a handful of depositors stayed outside the branch.

Marilou Obsioza, RBS administrative officer said spokesperson, confirmed that the Dumaguete unit was closed but she maintained that this was just temporary.

Obsioza assured clients that the branch would open soon but she could not give any specific date pending decision of the RBS board.

She admitted that the temporary closure of the branch had also caused apprehension among depositors in Cebu.

Those other RBS branches in the cities of Mandaue, Lapu-Lapu and Toledo stopped serving withdrawals starting Thursday.

Obsioza said the volume of drawn who went to the branches was beyond the average. Most of them intended to withdraw their deposits.

But Obsioza categorically said RBS did not declare a holiday. She explained that the bank did not accept withdrawals due to the heavy volume of transactions.

In a statement, the bank asked its clients to be patient. It noted that the sudden declaration of a holiday by rumor-mad banks in Cebu had created a false sense of uncertainty among depositors.

"When in neighboring rural banks declared a bank holiday, RBS chairman's knee-jerk reaction has probably affected the bank. Rest assured, the Rural Bank of Sulangdaku has no plans of declaring a bank holiday. The bank has the financial capability to cover its clientele's needs," the statement said.

Obsioza, who is also the administrative officer of RBS, said the bank was open to discuss but only to explain the situation.

Sawyer Tumulak, die in Cebu, who served as spokesperson of the rural banks, Philippine Countryside Rural Bank Inc. (PCRBI) and Filipino Rural Bank (FRB) that declared a bank holiday said the cause of the declaration was the heavy withdrawals, which started a month or two ago.

In a phone interview, Dr. Cesar attributed the heavy withdrawals to the Christmas season and the worldwide economic downturn.

"We will be working hand in hand with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., and it is our commitment to fully cooperate with the processes as required by the regulating agencies," he said.

He appealed to the depositors to remain calm and wait for more information about the status of the banks.

Gunmen attack Leyte publisher's house, send chilling message

By Jani Arnaiz
Inquirer Visayas

MAASIN CITY—GUNSHOTS roused from sleep the publisher of a monthly paper and his family here early Thursday in another apparent attack on journalists.

Police said unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle drove in front of Tony Reyes' house and opened fire. Reyes is the publisher of the weekly Southern Leyte Times.

Reyes and his family were asleep in their homes, which doubles as the paper's office, when the attackers came past 1 a.m.

The bullets hit the house's glass door and into a room occupied by Reyes, said SPO4 Abraham Lomoc of the Maasin police.

Investigators found a .45 cal. shell outside the house and a slug in the dining room.

Lomoc said that upon initial examination, the slug looked like a M9 which could mean that it was fired from an automatic gun.

"At first, we did not know if it was coming from a gun and much more if it was meant for us," Reyes said.

Reyes quoted neighbors as saying that they were too afraid to check what was happening after hearing the shots, but they identify the sound of a motorcycle stopping in front of the Reyeses' house.

"It could be a warning to us," said Reyes. "Somebody may have been hurt by critical articles we wrote in the newspaper."

Reyes' wife, Gloria, is president of the Southern Leyte State University.

Reyes said a string of libel cases that was filed against his paper had been dismissed, except for one.

He said he surmised that his paper's criticism of the local enforcement officer's stand on mining could be the motive for the shooting.

It was the first attack on a media man in the province, according to local journalists.

BUSAO CHAIRS
Tourism has become a major industry for impoverished areas in Bagao, but the world's financial crisis is threatening even this small hedging trick.

3 miners dead in soil erosion near Diwalwal

TACLAN CITY— THREE SMALL-scale miners were hit by falling rocks and died during a soil erosion in a mining village in Cateel-pounda town in Compostela Valley province late Wednesday afternoon, police said on Thursday.

Senior Supt. Ronald Dela Rosa, provincial police director, identified the fatalities as Jaboney Gonzales, his 20-year-old son Jhoel, and Julius Cervas.

Dela Rosa said the incident took place in Purok 23 in Sitio (sub-village) Bunga of Barangay (village) Agan at 4:30 p.m.

Crude mining

The victims and several other miners were trying to divert water from a creek when its top portion gave way sending rocks crashing down on them, Dela Rosa said.

Local officials told the bureau by phone that the accident happened during an increased downpour in the area.

Dela Rosa said residents and policemen from the Compostela municipal police station, led by Insp. Ali Tampac, conducted search and rescue operations and later dug up the bodies of the victims.

Crude mining methods, like placer mining, are common in most parts of gold-rich Compostela Valley. The province is said to hold huge deposits of gold.

Placer mining involves the recovery of gold particles in deposits of sand and gravel in stream beds.

No guarantees

But even this type of mining, as opposed to tunneling, does not guarantee the safety of miners.

Last month, seven people died when an avalanche of rocks and mud cascaded down a mountain in a mining village near Mt. Diwata in Monkayo, Compostela Valley.

Landslides have also stricken other gold areas in the province, where miners and their families have built homes on mountainsides despite warnings by authorities of potential hazards.

Early this year, two miners were killed when the tunnel they were working in collapsed, following a minor landslide in Amabo village, Pantukan town.

The deadliest landslide to have hit the province in recent years happened in September, when a portion of a mountain in Mawo town fell on Barangay Binuan.

The rain-induced landslide buried most of the village, killing at least 26 persons, including the village chief, and injuring dozens of other residents. Primakov Lim, Inquirer Mindanao

Cop in sex harassment case gets transferred

By David Israel Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—A CITY POlice officer facing a sexual harassment case has been reassigned, according to his superiors.

Chief Supt. Isagani Genon, police regional director, said Senior Insp. Virgilio Barrera was removed as deputy operations officer of the Iloilo City police office and moved to the provincial police because "the name and house of the PNP is at stake in this incident."

A female employee of the city government filed the sexual harassment complaint against Barrera, saying the officer touched her hips and hair while offering to send her to morning school during an inspection at Police Station 2.

Barrera denied the physical contact but admitted making comments in jest. He had apologized to the woman, but the woman rejected it and vowed to pursue the sexual harassment case.

Another officer, PO1 Jun Zepeda, of the city police's Women's and Children's Protection Desk, is being investigated for allegedly trying to convince the woman to withdraw the case against Barrera.

Zepeda denied it and said she was just trying to help the woman. "I have no reason to defend [Barrera]," Zepeda said.

Barrera promised his transfer, saying it was done despite the absence of a formal complaint.

Genon said the transfer would "pave the way for an impartial investigation" and did not mean Barrera's guilt.

"Nobody is untouchable in his position," Genon said.

SM City North Edsa world's third biggest mall

LIKE PHILHARMONIC IN THE RAIN Another SM spruces, this time in Bulacan, on Thursday. The SM annex in North Edsa, Quezon City, makes it the world's third largest shopping mall. MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Front page 4 >

ideo open today a mall in Bolivarg, Bolivar.

The launching comes as the onset of the Christmas season and the decline in fuel and food prices have mitigated preelection-year spending frenzies, according to results of the latest Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) survey.

Consumer confidence in the country, while remaining negative, improved to –48.3 percent in the fourth quarter compared with –52.8 percent in the third.

However, compared with the fourth quarter of 2007, consumers expect a worse Christmas this year as the index deteriorated from 33.6 percent.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the year-on-year comparisons may not be too meaningful because 2007 was the year when the country posted its strongest economic growth in three decades.

Long-term prospects

SM Prime president Hans Sy said launching the project amid the global crisis "speaks of how we view the longer-term prospects of the country."

Sy said have signed up for 70 percent of the leasable space in the six-story extension to the 40-hectare mall complex.

The Asian Development Bank forecast on Thursday that Philippine economic growth would slow to 4.3 percent this year and to 3.5 percent next year after a growth of 7.2 percent in 2007.

Hundreds of Filipinos employed abroad, part of a huge number of workers who remit the equivalent of 10 percent of the country's gross domestic product to their families back home every year, have lost their jobs, the government said.

Consumer index

At a press briefing yesterday, BSP Director Buenaventura Sicat said the consumer outlook improved because of the pullback in the prices of fuel and rice, and the expected upturn next year in business during the Christmas season) but also employment opportunities in the country and overseas.

The overall consumer index is computed by getting the difference between the percentage of households with a pessimistic view and those with a positive view. It is based on the average of three indices—one look on macroeconomic conditions, family financial situation and family incomes.

"The bottom line is that while the consumer index remained negative, the general trend is improving," Guinigundo said.

Consumers "won't buy" if things are really bad, even though it's Christmas or New Year, he said.

Results of the survey showed that buying conditions improved this quarter, with 13 percent of respondents believing favorable conditions compared with 11.4 percent in the third quarter.

House, car

Buying conditions for house and/or lot was highest at 22 percent, up by 3.1 percentage points.

The proportion of respondents who considered buying consumer durables and motor vehicles favorable this quarter, also increased to 14 percent (from 11.2 percent in the third quarter) and to 9.1 percent (from 6.1 percent), respectively.

Based on BSP quarterly surveys, seasonality is not always a big factor in the usually upbeat fourth quarter, said BSP Managing Director Cyd Amador.

Favorable buying conditions

There were instances in the past when the consumer confidence index for the fourth quarter would be weaker than in the third.

Among the reasons cited by respondents for the favorable buying conditions this quarter were affordability of durables due to easy installment terms and appliance sale during the holiday season, good investment options, and availability of housing loans at competitive rates.

On buying intentions for the next 12 months, about 18 to every 100 households indicate an intention to buy consumer durables. Eight out of every 100 intend to buy a house and/or lot and four out of every 100 intend to buy motor vehicles.

This year's fourth quarter survey was conducted on Oct. 1-15, thus already reflecting the impact of the US-centered financial crisis.

The nationwide survey covered 3,648 households, which were representative of the income distribution of families in the country.

About 57 percent of the respondents came from the low-income households or those earning less than P10,000 a month.

The middle-income class, those earning P30,000 to P50,000 monthly, accounted for 32.8 percent, while those earning at least P80,000 accounted for 9.1 percent.

As to macroeconomic expectations, consumers said the peso would continue to depreciate against the US dollar while unemployment and interest rates would rise in the year ahead.

They also expressed gains of basic goods and services to go up. *Reports from AFP and Maria C. Bautista*

World's biggest malls

1) SOUTH CHINA MALL (Dongguan, China)—660,000 sq m

2) Ito Yokado (Golden Resources Shopping Mall) (Beijing, China)—560,000 sq m

3) SM Mall of Asia (Philippines)*—486,000 sq m

4) Dubai Mall (Dubai, United Arab Emirates)—350,000 sq m

5) West Edmonton Mall (Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)—350,000 sq m

6) Cevahir Istanbul (Istanbul, Turkey)—340,000 sq m

7) SM Megamall (Philippines)—332,000 sq m

8) Berjaya Times Square (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)—320,000 sq m

9) Beijing Mall (Beijing, China)—320,000 sq m

10) Eastwood Mall Complex (Quezon City, Philippines)—307,000 sq m

Sources: Forbes.com, http://www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/projects/malls/World.html

* With the unveiling of its new annex, SM City North Edsa (425,000 sq m) is now the third biggest mall in the world.

Mike A faked illness? Outrageous, says lawyer

Front page 4 >

ment there for money laundering.

"These reports are outrageous," lawyer Roy Alberto said in a statement, pointing out that the President's husband was not engaged in money laundering and was not facing any investigation abroad.

Rondain said Arroyo suffered abdominal pains on the plane bound for Los Angeles, but a doctor felt that diverting the flight to Guam was the "most prudent course of action" given his cardiac history.

The President and her entourage, including doctors, left Manila on Nov. 23 to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation leaders' summit in Peru via Los Angeles.

After being confined overnight in a hospital in Guam, Arroyo was flown back to Manila the next day and brought to St. Luke's Medical Center. The President went ahead with her trip to Peru.

"Fortunately, it was not a hoax or a lark as reported by media. But it is morally offensive by irresponsible and malicious members of the media to exploit the misfortune of the sick to trivialize their concern," Rondain said.

"The time Gen. Esperon did not ask for publicity about his illness. It is grossly unfair for some members of the media to request information about it, only to mock that information after it is disclosed."

Prompted by 'tip'

Likn Bayuga, who writes a column for the Tribune, wondered if the diversion was prompted by a tip that a VIP in the flight would be picked up by the authorities upon landing in Los Angeles for money-laundering activities.

Picking up from Bayuga's column, senators Aquino wrote to the Manila Standard Today that the most logical way for the plane would have been Honolulu, about an hour away from where the plane was during the emergency.

Rondain said it was insulting to insinuate that Japanese and Filipino doctors, who attended to the First Gentleman, took part in a "grand conspiracy" to feign his illness.

"If there was any conspiracy at all it was not Mr. Arroyo's. It was a 'conspiracy of nothing,' hatched in the minds of individuals who have nothing better to write about," he said.

Rondain divided the witnesses and said it was "too easy" for them to discredible sources to "camouflage pure fabrications."

Anonymous sources

"If these 'reliable sources' do exist, they would have been in the presidential flight. And if they were in that flight, they would have known the truth," Rondain said.

"And, if these 'reliable sources' can in fact prove their perception of the facts, they could provide a major 'scoop' for the legislative media. These 'sources' would then have no reason to remain anonymous."

Rondain pooh-poohed insinuations that Arroyo's ill visits had been cancelled, saying he continues to hold a valid travel document in the United States.

Nothing to fear

"He has nothing to fear about landing in the United States. There is an ongoing investigation concerning him to date jurisdiction because he has not, and does not, engage in money-laundering activities. He does not even maintain an account in the United States," Rondain said.

On Wednesday, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney said she was unaware of the allegations that a money-laundering case had been filed by the US government against the First Gentleman.

"Never heard of it, Sorry, never heard a thing about it," Kenney told the bayanes in an interview on the sidelines of the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. *Reports from TJ Burgonio and Nikko Dizon*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2008

NEWS

Humans safe from swine Ebola, says DA chief

By Amy R. Remo

A STRAIN OF THE EBOLA VIRUS FOUND IN PIGS in four farms in Luzon is not harmful to humans and these local pork meat is safe to eat, agriculture officials said yesterday.

The Ebola-Reston strain is believed to have affected only domestic livestock and has so far not jumped between species, said Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap.

This is a predominantly animal health issue and is therefore of "negligible public health importance," said Director Gaudencio Gaspar, director of the Bureau of Animal Industry.

Lyndon Lee Ong, a DOH disease control manager, told AP that studies show the virus is a "low level" pathogen.

"Humans can get the virus, but it does not cause illness," she said.

Yap and Health Secretary Francisco Duque announced on Wednesday that a less pathogenic strain of the Ebola-Reston virus had been found in two commercial farms in Pulilan, Bulacan, and Mariveles, Pangasinan, and in two backyard farms in Cabanatuan and Talavera, Nueva Ecija.

This was the first Ebola case in swine, and the government was closely working with the World Health Organization and the World Organization of Animal Health in carrying out further tests, Yap said.

"This is the first time Ebola has been detected in pigs, but this is not a human health issue, but an animal health problem," Yap said a radio interview.

"There is no evidence that this could jump to humans... even if you are exposed to this virus, you will not get sick. This is not like the ebola hemorrhagic virus which hit Africa years ago," he said.

Three African strains that cause deadly hemorrhagic fever led to hundreds of human deaths in Africa.

Yap said the farms were being closely monitored. Farm hands and butchers had been tested, but results have so far come back negative, he said.

Other pigs on the farm were not infected, while old stocks of meat had been burned as a precaution, he said.

Davao advised the public that "it is safe to eat pork provided that the pork is properly handled and thoroughly cooked."

Yap reminded the public to buy pork only from markets inspected by agricultural officials and to wash the meat thoroughly.

Food handlers and the public are advised to follow five food safety rules; to keep clean; separate raw and cooked food; cook meat thoroughly; keep food at safe temperature and use safe water and select fresh food.

According to PCIJ, pork that is properly handled, washed and cooked is safe for human consumption because heat from adequate cooking kills viruses, including the Ebola-Reston.

As a precaution, all pork exportation have been suspended, Yap said.

Aplus METRO
Editor Alexander S. Lhuillier

DID YOU KNOW

Of THE four million killed in Manila conspiracy-ers in 2007, about 80,000 had multiple jobs.
Cyril Wakabeth, Inquirer Research

'Cops violated rules of engagement'

Napolcom cites PNP's failure to install blocking forces to protect civilians

By Allison W. Lopez and Jeannette I. Andrade

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE VIOLATED the rules of engagement when it failed to install blocking forces to protect civilians from an anticipated shootout with robbers in Parañaque City, the National Police Commission (Napolcom) said yesterday.

Napolcom vice chair Edmundo Rimando said initial investigations showed the police lacked a blockade that prevented the entry of other vehicles like the Isuzu Crosswind, which carried Wilson de Vera and his 7-year-old daughter Lea.

"There was no blocking force at the back of the area where the incident was expected to occur. This (sign) cost the lives of two civilians because the Crosswind managed to enter the conflict area," he said.

The two were among six civilians killed in the police shootout with alleged robbers Friday night. A total of 16 people—including suspects and an officer—died in the joint operation by the PNP Special Action Force, Highway Patrol Group, National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) and Southern Police District.

The shootout in Ermin Heritage 4 subdivision, described by NCRPO chief Leopoldo Bataoil as the "bloodiest firefight" between lawmen and criminal elements in Metro Manila, is being probed by the PNP Napolcom, the National Bureau of Investigation and the Commission on Human Rights.

"[They violated the provisions where] they have to identify entrance routes so civilians would be injured. We have non-lumbayanics and lapses. They have to explain," said Rimando.

He, however, said it was still early to conclude if SAF agents fired at the De Vera's vehicle, as claimed by some witnesses. CHRP's initial findings showed that about 80 bullets pierced the De Veras and their vehicle.

Another lapse which the PNP apparently committed was that there was no ambulance on standby to attend to those who would be hurt, Napolcom said.

"If there was such a facility, some of those wounded would not have died," Rimando added.

He said the obvious blunders that cost the deaths of civilians would translate to administrative cases for eviction imprisonment and negligence.

Appeal for fairness

Meanwhile, Manila Police District (MPD) director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales yesterday appealed for fairness in the coverage of the shootout.

Rosales, whose men were responsible for the arrest of more than 10 suspects in the killing of Ateneo de Manila University student Horacio "Atio" Castillo III in February, said the media should not be biased in favor of the victims.

"Let us not be biased in favor of the victims. Let us not be biased in favor of the victims. Let us not be biased in favor of the victims.

QC barangay execs to catch litterbugs

By Julie M. Aurelio

BARANGAY OFFICIALS IN Quezon City will soon have a new task on their hands—to catch unruly litterbugs.

The Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department will deputize barangay personnel as "private policemen" to enforce the city's environmental laws.

EPWMD head Frederika Benroya said these would-be cops are to apprehend violators and recommend prosecution before they are sent to catch people who wantonly throw their trash around.

"This program will also complement our campaign on cleanliness and waste reduction," she said.

Barangay personnel must be high school graduates in order to be considered an important environmental policemen.

Once deputized, the garbage cops will undergo a three-month probationary period after which they will be evaluated for their performance.

Earlier, Benroya launched "Kamay Bukol sa Kalsada" project which would allow residents at public schools to exchange recyclable materials such as plastic bottles, cans and used paper to exchange for school supplies.

The program, she said, would in teach students to practice solid waste management especially in their schools and homes.

LRT trips on Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve to close early

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUthority (LRTA) yesterday said its Rockwell Metrostation (Line 1) and Recto-Santolan (Line 2) systems will close earlier than usual on Dec. 24 and 31 to give more time to maintenance works.

The LRTA periodically conducts maintenance checks and repairs on all physical facilities, rolling stocks, canopy-ways, signaling system and concourse.

For Line 1, the last train will depart from Baclaran at 9 p.m. and Monumento at 9:30 p.m. on Dec. 24 and 31.

For Line 2, the last train will depart from Santolan at 9:30 p.m. and from Recto at 9 p.m. on Dec. 24. The operating schedule for Dec. 31 will be shorter by an hour, LRTA Administrator Melquiades Robles said.

Meaning the last commercial ride for Line 1 will be at 7:30 p.m. and from Recto at 8 p.m.

On other days declared as special non-working holidays, the usual schedule shall be followed.

Robles said in a statement that historically, ridership usually is low on these days and that last-trip passengers may go home for Christmas and New Year's hours. Rico P. Oblefias Jr.

MetroBriefs

Free eye screening, operation

MANILA residents suffering from cataract may now avail of free screening and operation at a city-run hospital, Mayor Alfredo Lim has announced. The pre-operation check-up and operation could be next month and also covers eye ailments from private hospitals. Lim has directed Ospital ng Tondo director Dr. Teodoro Matias to spearhead the conduct of cataract screening today at the Rosas Basketball Court in Aurora Boulevard residents of districts 1, 2 and 3. Patients from districts 4, 5 and 6, on the other hand, will be screened at the Baptist Sanctuary Complex on Dec. 16. The screening will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. David Santos

LPG-run tricycles

MORE eco-conscious friendly tricycles will soon ply the streets of Marikina City as the city government converts its tricycles to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). Marikina City is converting the engines of its local tricycles to the more environment-friendly fuel Mayor Tony Teodoro in a statement yesterday. The conversion program, he said, will not only reduce smoke and spew smoke emissions in the city but will also give tricycle drivers bigger savings. The city government is allocating P1 million from its livelihood budget to subsidize packages to tricycle drivers affiliated with the Federation of Marikina Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association (Femtoda). A conversion kit for a tricycle will cost P15,000.

Beverly T. Ramos

RP-Latin American Studies

THE PHILIPPINE Academic Center here for Latin American Studies (Pacles) chaired the Chair Holders of the Philippines Department of History, holds the first ever Philippine-Latin American Studies Conference on Dec. 15-16 at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) in Intramuros and on Dec. 17 at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. The City of Manila, the Manila Historical and Heritage Commission, the PLM and the Office of the Chancellor, UP-Diliman have jointly co-sponsored the conference with Pacles. The conference includes a regular forum that brings together scholars on Philippine and Latin American studies from here and abroad.

'Cops violated rules . . .'

Reuters-AFP

boss of the Ozamiz robbery group in follow-up operations in Cebu last Saturday, because of the fact that hours in news coverage of the Pantaleon incident is mostly on the civilians caught in the crossfire.

At a press conference yesterday, Rosales pointed out that the presentation of facts about the Ozamiz and Pinoy Pikoy robbery groups was intended to emphasize the notoriety of the syndicates' members.

"No bar is set-up," he said addressing the members of the media. "So we can show how terrible these groups' activities are."

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, for his part, said yesterday the policemen who had killed innocent civilians in the shootout were not automatically at fault.

"A human rights violation should arise if there was intent to violate. If you're a civilian caught in a crossfire, if you're an active operative, how do you consider that?" he said.

Meanwhile, police officials declined to the media yesterday that eight suspected robbers considered a black Toyota Vios after the white Revo they were riding cruised into the ruling of Aurora's Rizal Service Road.

The police, however, could not fix at 8am what they claimed into the ruling because a jeepney loaded with passengers was trapped in the chaos. With reports from Dona Pazz Bugtas and Jocelyn Uy.

Chicago workers vote to end sit-in at factory

CHICAGO—JUBILANT WORKERS celebrated outside a Chicago factory after approving a $1.75-million agreement to end their six-day sit-in, a dispute that became a symbol of the plight of jobs across the United States.

Republic Windows & Doors, unions leaders and Bank of America reached the deal on Wednesday night. Workers entering shouting hugs left the Republic Mid-Century within hours.

About 200 of 240 laid-off workers began their sit-in last week after Republic gave them just three days' notice the plant was closing. They vowed to stay until they received severance pay and unused vacation pay.

Each former Republic employee will get eight weeks' salary, all accrued vacation pay and two months' paid health care, said UN Rep. Luis Gutierrez, who helped broker the deal.

Gutierrez said the deal would work out to about $7,000 per worker.

"We lost the jobs but we got something," said Lilo Blanco, who worked at the plant for 16 years.

Gutierrez, an Illinois Democrat, said the $1.75 million would go into an escrow account for the workers, $1.65 million of which came from Bank of America in the form of a loan to Republic.

"Although we see a lender with an obligation to pay Republic's employees as stated, Citigroup loans to Republic, we agreed to extend an additional loan to be used exclusively to pay its employees," Jarrod Kahn, the bank's Illinois president, said in a statement.

New York-based JPMorgan Chase & Co. pledged $460,000 to use strictly for the preventing employees, Gutierrez said.

The workers are "very, very satisfied" with the agreement, said Mark Meinster of the United Electrical Workers union, which represents the employees.

"Hopefully this is an example for workers across the country that when things like this happen, you can step up, you can speak out, and you can win," he said.

Lawmakers earlier had criticized Bank of America for cutting off funds to the plant after it exhausted its credit line even though the Charlotte, North Carolina-based bank itself received $25 billion from the government's financial bailout package.

The bank was given that money so it could provide credit to companies like Republic that employ workers, Meinster said.

"We're hopeful the banks get that message," he said. "My sense is it's going to take a lot more."

The workers had argued that Republic violated federal law because employees were not given 60 days' notice that they were losing their jobs.

Republic officials did not return messages on Wednesday from The Associated Press. Messages left seeking further details from JPMorgan Chase were also not returned. AP

VICTORIOUS workers of Republic Windows & Doors celebrate today after winning a $1.75-million settlement with the company and its bank.

WORLD BRIEFS

Security revamp

NEW DELHI—India announced a massive overhaul of its security and intelligence agencies on Thursday in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks that left 171 dead and provoked a public outcry over the government's response. Among the new measures, the government will seek to create an FBI-style national investigative agency, beef up coastal security, better train local police, strengthen antiterror laws and increase intelligence sharing. AP

Obama appointments

WASHINGTON— President-elect Barack Obama intends to name not his environmental and national resources team with a federal first by naming a city official and three former Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials from the Clinton administration. The president-elect has selected Steven Chu for energy secretary, Lisa Jackson for EPA administrator, Carol Browner as his energy "czar," and Nancy Sutley to lead the White House Council on Environmental Quality, according to Democratic officials with knowledge of the decisions. AP

Suicide on TV

LONDON— The unsavory difficult to watch event for viewers stunned in the subject of dying by a bloody shot of violent Hollywood and television here. Craig Tippett, a former computer scientist from Chicago, a sincere lyricist lived with his wife at his side while he takes terrible jokes. He asks for a glass of apple juice to quote the last taste and help him swallow. Then he wants his teeth to turn off his ventilator—and does so. Jackie's obsession with reality television reached new heights—to depths—Wednesday night with the broadcast of the assisted suicide of the 59-year-old terminally ill drug user at a Swiss clinic. Showing the final moments of death had long been a taboo, even for co-hosts Jacqui Brown TV, whose ban and condemnation increased. The broadcast also reignited debate on whether that strongly divides public opinion. AP

More brigades

KABUL, Afghanistan— The Pentagon is moving to get three of the four combat brigades requested by commanders into Afghanistan by summer. US Defense Secretary Robert Gates said on Wednesday as he traveled here to meet with military leaders. In his most specific comments to date about how soon he will need the call for up to 20,000 more troops in Afghanistan, Gates said he would like to have at least three brigades in Iraq by the end of next year. Those three brigades total about 15 people. AP

Greek riots

ATHENS— Students have attacked at least five police stations across the Greek capital in a renewal of clashes over the police shooting of a 15-year-old boy. Many injured authorities say at least one man was hospitalized with injuries on Thursday as groups of teenagers attacked the police stations with rocks and bottles. The injuries follow five days of rioting across Greece that damaged or destroyed hundreds of stores and injured about 70 people. AP

Antipiracy plan

SHATTS NATION— The United States is proposing to block down Somali pirates not only at sea, but on land and in Somalia in an effort with cooperation from the still-lean country's weak UN-backed government. The United States on Wednesday circulated a draft United Nations Security Council resolution on the issue. It proposes that all nations and regional groups cooperating with Somalia's government in the fight against piracy and armed robbery "may take all necessary measures ashore in Somalia." AP

Bird flu

KUALA LUMPUR—(United Health Organization (WHO) official urged Asian governments on Thursday not to let down their guard against bird flu, saying even mild talk at Hong Kong about the disease still poses a threat. The (WHO) official said Hong Kong authorities had responded well by suspending poultry imports for 21 days and warning the slaughter of 40,000 birds after three chickens found dead at a farm on Monday tested positive for the (H5 strain) virus. Further tests are being conducted to see if they had the deadly (H5N1 strain). AP

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The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Queco

Fissures arise over how to save global economy

LONDON—CRACKS EMERGED IN THE GLOBAL effort to drag the world out of recession on Thursday with Germany attacking Britain ahead of an European Union summit for rushing into debt to bail out industries and ramp up growth.

Definitive fears grew in China, the United States moved closer to an auto industry bailout, and South Korea's central bank cut interest rates a record amount and pledged more drastic action to keep its economy afloat.

In a move that suggested how far ahead Germany is of concerted European and perhaps world efforts to end the financial crisis and restore global economic growth, Germany criticized countries for rushing into national economic rescue packages.

In an interview with Newsweek magazine, Finance Minister Peer Steinbrueck urged governments to pause before pledging to spend billions of dollars to try to pack their economies out of trouble.

"The speed at which proposals are put together under pressure that don't even pass an economic test is breathtaking and depressing," Steinbrueck said in the interview, published on the magazine's website on Wednesday.

He singled out British Prime Minister Gordon Brown for particular criticism, accusing him of embarking on economic policies that would saddle a generation with debt.

Another German policymaker, European Central Bank Executive Board Member Jurgen Stark, also lambasted countries' responses to the crisis, saying on Wednesday that the bank did not have a lot of room for maneuver after its latest interest rate cut last week.

The comments came as European Union leaders were to meet in Brussels for a summit. French Economy Minister Christine Lagarde was quoted in Germany's Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung as saying collective action was needed to head off a major recession.

But she added: "I am not shocked by the German position. We have the same analysis, diagnosis and the same goals. The tempo is not exactly the same. The British have reached a bit ahead of everyone else."

Definitive promises that are spreading through Europe and the United States also were appear to be threatening China, the world's fast-largest economy.

China's annual consumer price inflation fell to a new two-year low in November, a report showed on Thursday, a day after data reflected a collapse in ride-electric prices and a startling drop in exports and imports.

While the slowdown in inflation can be explained by the sharp decline in commodity prices, demand-sapping credit crises under way in Europe, Japan and the United States point to a heavy hit on factory gate and consumer inflation in one of Asia's top economies.

Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Anthony equals NBA mark as Nuggets win /A29

SPORTS
Editor Tobitose S. Melendres • Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

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$70-MILLION WINDFALL

Hoya-Pacman PPV fortune bared

INQUIRER estimates put Pacquiao's PPV take at $11.2 million (P539 million) gross.

By Percy D. Della

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—RECESSION OR NOT, THERE WAS NO EMBARGOing the excitement of many fans at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas on the night Manny Pacquiao turned the "Dream Match" into a nightmare for Oscar De La Hoya.

And now comes the pay-per-view (PPV) figures. And there's no disputing the numbers either.

Game's fighting persona may have been somewhat lost in the ring Saturday evening, but his sheer box-office fire, sends more debate by the most credible and deadly of opponents in the Filipino ring commissioner: 1.25 million PPV buys to strike giant HBO.

At $54.95 per viewership add up to about $70 million (P3.34 billion) and counting for video profit margin all around.

COMMENTARY

(The layman estimates that Pacquiao will earn a pre-tax windfall of $12 million from his PPV share).

The ringing from the HBO cash register is music to the promoters' ears and certainly more than enough to soothe the Golden Boy's battered body and ego.

De La Hoya-Pacquiao has also notched a record—it's the first PPV boxing match this year to breach the one million mark.

HBO figures reported by Broadcastermedia.com, the industry portal, said the fight is only the fourth non-heavyweight event to reach one million buys. Each already all four features De La Hoya.

Numbers rose on this list in the 2006 De La Hoya-Floyd Mayweather Jr. fight, which drew 2.4 million buys, followed by the 1999 De La Hoya-Felix Trinidad card (2 million buys) and the 2004 De La Hoya-Bernard Hopkins bout (1.4 million buys).

The payroll also quoted Mark Taffet, the HBO chief for sports operations.

Taffet said: "De La Hoya-Pacquiao definitely exceeded our expectations. We hoped that fight would hit the million-buy mark, which is the barometer for mega fights in that sport, but we were uncertain given the state of the economy. We were really pleased that boxing fans everywhere showed tremendous support for the fight."

Taffet paints a bright picture for Pacquiao, who reportedly up to 400,000 buys for one of his fights. He also paid tribute to Manny's huge potential to become a major PPV attraction in his own right.

Pacquiao has become a household name," Taffet said.

The Ocean Match (number also indicate the Ultimate Fighting Championship) has yet to reach full market potential.

Although a threat to boxing, the UFC's PPV record still stands at 650,000 buys from the Brock Lesnar-Randy Couture fight last Nov. 15 also at the MGM Grand, reported Broadcastermedia.com.

Realtors roll back Purefoods Giants

By Mycmy B. Cuerdo

STA. LUCIA GAME CHARGING BACK from 11 points down in the fourth quarter last night to nip Purefoods, 73-71, at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig, and stay in the running for an outright playoff spot in the PBA-BFC Philippine Cup.

Jeworski Tan and reigning MVP Kelly Williams joined hands as the defending champion Realtors rebounded from back-to-back losses to leap over to 6-6.

The Giants dropped a second straight game and, at 7-9, are in danger of being relegated to the one-and-done wild card phase.

Sta. Lucia, which won this tournament at the expense of the Giants in seven games last year, trailed all night before Tan banked the Realtors out with a great display of offensive prowess.

The former La Salle ace scored 10 straight points in a 15-4 run that hoisted a 42-31 Purefoods lead into a 56-all contest.

Meanwhile, Ato Miguel Ildefonso dug in deep Gran Colo Valley looking to grab temporary second place and move closer to an outright spot in the Final Four.

Committee is 6 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao with the odds stacked in favor of the Brewmen, who will be gunning for a second straight game and 10th in 15 outings overall to stay behind leader Alaska.

The ube Acre fell in thrashing Ilefonso back-to-the-wall Red Bull on Wednesday night, 108-80, and were saved to one at least more of their four games to secure an automatic semifinal berth.

Asa Miguel Beer still has to play Sta. Lucia and Barangay Ginebra and every game is vital for the Brewmen, who are tied for second with Talk 'N Text.

Red Bull, meanwhile, seeks a tiebreaker in Ube Alaska victory and has its Bicutoring hopes of advancing to the wild-card phase when the Barako collide with the Air21 Express in the 7:30 p.m. contest.

At 9-11, the Barako are in the bottom of the standings, but their fortunes can change dramatically with today's schedule, especially if the Tigers, who could still be without Alex Cabagnot, fall to San Miguel and they win over Air21.

Cabagnot has missed the last two Ginebra outings, which the Tigers lost by big margins. The ace point guard is out because of a knee injury and has been listed as day-to-day.

"We're not totally giving up in this conference," Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao said Wednesday night. "But it's a difficult task (winning on the playoffs). I guess this win will lift it up (outside of the team) as a boost we can get back our

PUREFOODS' Sorby Raymundo tries to Gta. Lucia's Marlon Aquino for possession in last night's game.

Diaz, Valero coming; Barrera invited

By Recah Trinidad

MEXICAN DAVID DIAZ, WHO LOST HIS world lightweight crown to Manny Pacquiao last June, has confirmed his attendance in the Filipino ring icon's 30th birthday celebration in Gen. Santos City on Dec. 17.

Diaz, whom Pacquiao stopped in the ninth round to earn the WBC 135-lb crown, is scheduled to arrive in Manila on Dec. 16 before flying to Pacquiao's hush-the next day.

The two-time world champion by Jeff Horn, a physical therapist friend of Pacquiao, who will be accompanying Diaz to his trip from California.

With super featherweight champion Edwin Valero has also confirmed his attendance in Pacquiao's Las Vegas-style party, according to Dr.Guzman.

DIAZ

BARRERA

Diaz will be in the country for four days.

Dr. Guzman, scion of an influential political family in Cavite City, said Marco Antonio Barrera, who was among the Mexican Pacquiao had beaten to earn himself the sobriquet "Mexecutioner," has also been invited.

Pacquiao, who retained his WBC crown last weekend in a unanimous decision yesterday by his grateful and proud countrymen.

Meanwhile, Timothy Bradley, the undefeated WBC super lightweight champ, is also talking about a possible match with the Mexican.

Bradley (23-0, 11 KOs) is the third fighter to draw interest in tackling Pacquiao—if the Pacman wants to go down to 140 lb.—after Ricky Hatton and Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Bradley's promoter Gary Shaw has reportedly said that a fight between the boxers and the Filipino ring icon would be meaningful.

According to Shaw, it would be interesting for Pacquiao to take on someone under 30.

With a report from Jerry Dalla

Tañamor reaches World Cup semis

BEIJING OLYMPIAN JAMEY Tañamor outpunched and outsmarted Mongkon Rasadon of Thailand, 9-4, to advance to the semifinals of the boxing World Cup in Manaoag.

Tañamor, battling Rasadon at the center of the ring most of the way, used his longer reach and vast experience to outbox his foe to one of the four semifinal quarterfinal matches.

The 23-year-old Filipino next faces Poland's Lukasz Maszczyk who downed Beijing quarterfinalist Daulkhio Carvalho of Brazil, 9-7.

The tough, unruly but tecnical Tañamor outmaneuvered Rasadon who has been all over the world with Russia and Cuba sending the most number of humiliated boxers.

The Philippine team's trip was made possible by sponsors Philippine Sports Commission and Pacific Heights.

Pharex halts Harbour run

Cruz powers Hapee past Toyota

By Cedelf F. Tejero

WITH ITS PLAYOFF HOPES HANGING BY a thread, Pharex resorted to an unfamiliar script and made five-time champion Harbour Centre look vulnerable for the first time in the PBL-Pru Life Insurance Cup.

The bounce-back squad dove down the stretch in back out a 90-74 kingpin upset of the Barangay Ginebra last night for their first victory at the Araneta Coliseum in Manila.

Carl Melegrito avoided what could have been another nightmarish ending for the Generals, turning two free throws with 2.9 seconds left as Pharex stopped Harbour's crowd-galvanizing run.

Pharex also snapped Harbour's 12-game streak since the previous conference.

Earlier, Hapee threw a stiffer all-around effort from Jervy Cruz and gained solo third by trouncing Toyota Otis, 92-66.

With their fourth win in seven games, the Complete Protection booster finds bid for an outright semifinal berth.

Cruz, who also grabbed 11 rebounds, donated the Spoilers' ten-with an undefeated stint with Harbingers for a 77-66 outburst with two minutes remaining, before thwarting a driving Jenuse Seria on the next play.

Pharex coach Cadet Tan was a picture of relief after the bounce finally broke through.

"I guess playing the best brings out the best in my players," said Tan. "Any guy I put in today delivered quality plays."

Trailing 69-63 with 8:28 to go after back-to-back triples by Peter Rimban, the Rating Fire whipped up successive late surge behind Eric Menchavez, whose three-point play cut the lead, 69-75, with 3:37 left.

After a Melegrito split, Andy Barroca nailed a long jumper and Jessie Cruz enforced the deficit, 74-75, going into the last 16 seconds.

Melegrito missed a couple of chances with 12 ticks left, handing Harbour another chance following a double-lane Pharex violation.

HARBOUR Center's Benedict Fernandez drives a foul as he drives off two Pharex defenders.

ADAM ROMERO

PSI: School is now open

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Sev Sarmenta

RAYMOND DITO-ror in the Philippine Sports Institute (PSI) can only mean good things for sports in the country.

Under the aegis of the Philippine Sports Commission, the PSI now has its education, training and sports medicine consorts centralized in its Pasig Philsports Complex. Home School no longer stays in the area, freeing up several buildings for dormitories, libraries and training facilities.

From an educational standpoint, it's a graduate school for coaches, sports executives and trainers. Certificate programs as well as Master's and Doctorate degrees are now offered. Particularly attractive to modern-day sport are subjects from sports medicine to event management, from officiating to nutrition. The faculty will be made up of local and foreign sports experts.

The Institute will continue to help in the training of elite athletes while also reaching for grassroots and promising young talent and talent development. It will be a center of one-stop learning center for sports and a sporting culture that promotes an active lifestyle, regardless of age or station in life.

The only thing the PSI will not be is an instant remedy for all our disappointments in international sports competitions. The Institute is just one part of the solution. Other solutions—other sports concerns like training and competitions abroad, building better sports facilities and funding.

It will not produce ASAP that long sought for Olympic gold medal for the country. Many countries are very ahead of us in preparing Olympic athletes with well-conditioned and adequately funded programs. There is a lot of catching up to do.

Although I am beginning to feel that my generation will not see a Filipino winning an Olympic gold medal, some optimism can be offered by initiatives like the PSI. You see, I remember very late last night listening to Joe Cascaño's radio account of Anthony Villanueva's loss in Tokyo in 1964 and was a father three days when I woke up at 1 a.m. to watch Onyok Velasco's 1996 loss in Atlanta.

That's 32 years of waiting. Many older folks have waited longer!

The PSI will not see immediately improvement on medal haul in the Asian Games or middle or in slug it out for overall honors every time the SEA games are held. The institute should be viewed as a long-term investment, a work in progress with very good intentions.

If we are the impatient kind, then let's not even give the PSI a chance. But let's then be prepared for years when there are no medal rate medals for the Filipino athlete. The cost of the sports world has gotten stronger and wiser. Athleticism today needs a scientific framework of the project kind.

If the attendance at the Stakeholders meeting at the Multi-Purpose Sports Arena last November is an indication of interest in a better Philippine sports future, then the PSI is off and running. Close to 400 coaches, managers, directors and program coordinators as well as sports media from all over the country came to listen to what sports leaders have to relate and see what the facilities is all about.

Why go all this trouble, you might say, to form a winning Team Philippines in international competitions? Why establish an institute to improve physical and mental sports training? Isn't it enough that we participate in the Olympics and the several multisports events or competitions of specific sports?

Whenever in international competitions provide winning countries with a balm to soothe many frustrations and a boon to nagging egoists. And given all that we have to worry about, ignore or accept in our part of the world, we need more than Manny Pacquiao's two or three victories a year to keep this nation's morale up.

LASCUÑA: In front

Lascuña opens with 69 in Cambodia

SIEM REAP, CAMBODIA—ANTONIO LASCUÑA finished strong with three birdies on his last six holes Thursday to wind up with a three-under par 69 after the first round of the $300,000 Johnnie Walker Cambodian Open.

Shooting birdies on the 13th, 16th and 17th holes to enjoy a 36-33=69 at the Phokeethi Country Club course, Lascuña jumped in the first seven among eight Filipinos in the field, although he trailed leader Rhys Davies of Wales by five strokes.

Jack Pagsanjan (35-33) gunned down seven birdies but had three bogeys and a double bogey on the par-5 ninth hole for a 78, the same output of Mars Penny (36-34) who started with a double bogey and then picked up four birdies the rest of the way.

Antonio Monsanto Jr. (34-37) and Jeromie Delarmente (37-34) also fired 71 and Frankie Ishikawa (37-33) matched par 72.

Jay Bayron (40-34) and Marvin Dumandan (40-36) were in danger of missing the halfway cut with a 74 and 74, respectively.

Davies, who tied in a playoff in Shanghai last October of Thailand in the Siam Bank Thailand Masters last week, fired a 66 for a one-stroke lead over American Anthony Kang.

Rory Hidayat of Indonesia was third with a 68 followed by Thai Chawalit Plaphol, who carded a 67.

Defending champion Bryan Saltus of the United States began his defense of the title with a 72.

James Ryan Alvaro

SPORTSWATCH

Catch EPL's Big 3 in action

THE ENGLISH PREMIERSHIP LANGLE'S "Big 3"—Liverpool, Chelsea and Manchester United—try to remain on top of the board when they take on separate foes this weekend. ESPN Star Sports will show the Manchester City-Everton game at 10:30 p.m. and the Liverpool-Hull City at 10:30 on Saturday. On Sunday, Bolton hosts Chelsea. Tottenham game will be shown at 1:30 p.m. on Star Sports. Chelsea leader Wigan hosts Arsenal at 11:30 p.m. on ESPN.

Pasay derby fires off today

PASAY CITY COUNCILOR TOM DE LEMOS' class "Thaksin Ko Sa Pasay" 4-team derby fires off today at 1 p.m. with more than 30 matches lined up.

Architect PCC pet manager Edu dela Cruz, the one-day "rattle royale among star-light coasters is backed by the Kalian at Cookers Association, the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association and the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines.

'Concrete Breaker' tilt on

ALL-OUT TO FIGHTS WILL BE STAGED today in the Concrete Breaker 5-Cock Derby at the Makati Coliseum.

A guaranteed prize of at least P500,000 is at stake in the derby to be hosted by Tan Kiko of Manila cocker Emil Chua.

Last Wednesday, four entries topped the Richard Bates Memorial 4-cock derby. They are Tonio and Mike of Mike Romulo, Jaime Dalisay of Bacoor, Cabitelle, Martin of Nina Bacon and Long Jason of Dasmariñas.

NEW BALANCE CHAMPS Women's 23K winner Marvel Magallon is flanked at the winners' podium by second placer Marica Torres and third placer Ellen Talentino as the awards rites of the recent 7th New Balance Power Run at the Clark International Freeport Zone. With the winners are (from left) CDC manager for tourism and external affairs Noemi Garcia, CDC president Benigno H. Roubert and Planet Sports inc. president Arnor Concepcion. Air Force enlisted man and Team Bataan runner-standout Bernardo Desaranes ruled the men's 21K race in 1:29:43. Magallon clocked a personal-best 1:41:21.

Las Piñas five pips St. Francis

LAS PIÑAS COLLEGE unleashed remarkable consistency in the Manila Intercollegiate and Colleges of Luzon defenders Association (Filoil) basketball tournament in the San Andrew gym in Manila.

[illegible]	1	0
St. Francis	1	1
De La Salle	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1
[illegible]	1	1

Markus Penang provided cure the LPC Blue Lions' offensive with 17 points.

LPC's only other win was a 75-40 crushing of National College of Business and Arts.

In the first game, De Ocampo Memorial College secured one game behind St. Francis at 1-1 by dumping winless St. Jude College, 73-46.

MCBA rose to 1-1 Wednesday after an 80-62 overtime win over Colegio de San Monica.

Fore by Four: 300 teams tee off today

THREE HUNDRED TEAMS DESPITE five divisional titles as the Four by Four Invitational member-guest tournament of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club tees off today and tomorrow at the sprawling golf complex in Cavite, Tanza, Cavite.

A premium lot in this 36-hole 600-shotmaker and a Toyota Vios are up for grabs as hole-in-one prizes in the two-day competition to be played at the four championship courses designed by Nick Faldo, Jam Anki, Andy Dye and Greg Norman.

More than P3 million worth of cash prizes, including three Vios sedans, will be given away to the raffle at the end of the 36-hole extravaganza.

The men's flow by four is supported by Eagle Ridge Philippine Daily Inquirer, Bel Lucio Realty, PRI Golf, Toyota Motor Phils., Coca-Cola, Alaska Insurance Brokers Corp., San Miguel, Purefoods, LG, Unisan, Universal Smithkline, Philippine Airlines, Pizza 6, DOSA Clothiers, GMA Globalnews, Golf Depot and Kingcal.

Teams in Class A and Class C will play the foursome and Dye course done in Class B, Class D and ladies' division will tackle the Faldo and Nelson Classic courses are at 7 a.m. and at noon. Tomorrow's tee-off will be at 6:30.

Suns acquire Richardson, Dudley for Bell, 2 more

PHOENIX — THE PHOENIX SUNS ACQUIRED guard Jason Richardson and forward Jared Dudley from the Charlotte Bobcats in exchange for Raja Bell, Boris Diaw and Sean Singletary on Wednesday.

Richardson, the fifth overall pick in the 2001 NBA draft, was the key to the deal for the Suns, who are looking for a spark following an uneven start to the season that has left them in eighth place in the Western Conference standings.

"He's a guy who is athletic, was a National Championship at Michigan State and has an excellent reputation around the league," general manager Steve Kerr said on the Suns' website (http://www.nba.com/suns).

Richardson was leading the Bobcats in scoring, averaging 18.7 points, just off his career average.

The Bobcats, sitting second last in the East and also looking for shake up their line-up, got Donte'Greene Drew, a first round pick of the Atlanta Hawks in the 2004 draft who was once voted the NBA's most improved player and Bell from the Virgin Islands, a source from celebrated a team television had spoken.

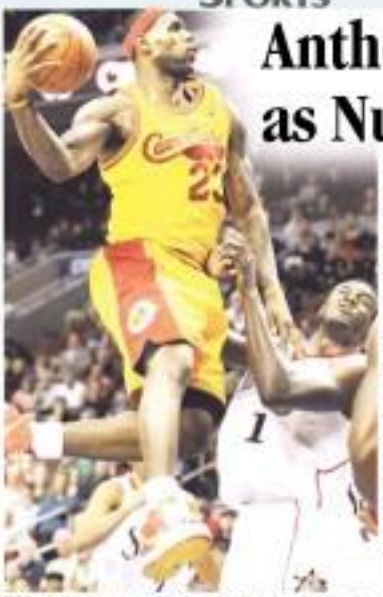
Singletary was acquired over the summer to a deal with the Houston Rockets. Reuters

Russians eclipse 4x50 relay record

SUMA, CROATIA — RUSSIA'S MEN'S FELIX 4x50 meters medley team have set a new world record to qualifying at the European short-course swimming championship in Rijeka, Croatia.

The Russian team set a new record of 1 minute 33.77 seconds on Thursday.

The Italian team had earlier broken the previous world record of 1:34.06, set by a Germany team in Helsinki in 2006, finishing in 1:34.01 in the first heat. But only minutes later, in the second heat, the Russian team of Stanislav Donets, Sergei Geybel, Nikolay Skvortsov and Sergei Fedkin set the new record. AP



THE CAVS' LeBron James soars over Theo Samson Dalembert on his way to the hoop. ar

Anthony ties mark as Nuggets prevail

DENVER — CARMELO ANTHONY MATCHED THE NBA RECORD FOR points in a quarter with 33 in the third and finished with a season-high 45 points in the Denver Nuggets' 116-105 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Wednesday.

Anthony tied the NBA mark of 33 points set by San Antonio's George Gervin in the second quarter against New Orleans on April 9, 1978. Anthony broke the franchise record of 32 set by David Thompson against Detroit, also on April 9, 1978.

Chauncey Billups added 22 points in Denver's eighth straight win over Minnesota.

Al Jefferson led 26 points and 12 rebounds and Randy Foye also scored 26 points for Minnesota, which has lost seven straight games and two in a row since Kevin McHale took over as head coach Monday.

Cavaliers 101, 76ers 93

At Philadelphia, LeBron James scored 29 points and Mo Williams added a season-high 27 as Cleveland beat Philadelphia to evade to its 20th consecutive victory.

Andreson Varejao added 15 points and five Wallace led 15 rebounds for the Central Division-leading Cavaliers, who improved to 19-2 and 7-1 on the road. They are one win shy of tying the franchise record of 11 straight wins set during the 1988-89 season.

Andre Iguodala scored a season-high 27 points for the 76ers.

Knicks 121, Nets 109

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Al Harrington scored a season-high 39 points, leftist New Jersey high school star Tim Thomas also had his best game of the season as New York rallied to beat the Nets.

Harrington was a point short of his career high, while Thomas scored a season-high 26. Acquired in separate deals on the same day last month, Harrington and Thomas were two others for the New forwards, helping New York secure back-to-back wins for the first time.

Wilson Chandler added 24 points for the Knicks, who rebounded from a 105-100 loss in Chicago on Tuesday night and won for just the second time in six games.

Devin Harris scored 32 points for the Nets.

Cavaliers leader Scores: LA Lakers 88, Houston 112; San Antonio 108, New Orleans 103; Charlotte 86, Memphis 100; Oklahoma City 102, Cleveland 105; Philadelphia 93, San Antonio 101; Atlanta 88, Denver 101; Minnesota 105, Golden State 116; Milwaukee 88, LA Lakers 115; Phoenix 110,

Dartnall leads as Daly puts up smashing show

SYDNEY — LITTLE-KNOWN QUALIFIER Stephen Dartnall grabbed a share of the first-round lead at the Australian Open on Thursday but John Daly stole the show by recording a spectator's camera against a tree.

Dartnall, who only made it into the field by playing a qualifying event on Monday, shot a seven-under-par 65 at Royal Sydney to finish the day tied for the lead with fellow Australians Matthew Goggin and Brett Rumford.

Dartnall's performance was largely overshadowed by Daly, who recorded a spectator's camera into a tree when he tried to take his photograph after he had pushed his tee shot into the rough.

Daly, in danger of missing the cut after shooting 78, said in a statement: "Spectator ran out of bush to take photo — bang-up."

Two-current organizers backed the American, the winner of two majors in a troubled career, saying the spectator had breached the conditions of entry by bringing the camera on to the course.

"If I was 10 under par I would have felt the same. My eyes are still burning from the flash of the camera," Daly said. "I feel it was very rude to put a camera that close to anybody's face in any situation. The guy that had the camera [sic] already taken a dozen shots at close range."

Australian Marcus Fraser and Rumford shot 67 to join New Zealanders Mark Brown and David Smail two shots back. Reuters

JOHN Daly

SPORTS

17-SPORT BATTLES

Olympic fest finals unfolds

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—ABOUT 3,000 athletes from 32 local government units plunge into action today to kick off the national finals of the 3rd Philippine Olympic Festival at the Dicon Gregorio Pelaez Sports Complex here.

It will be a hectic day at the pool with swimming drawing the most number of participants—326—here among the 17 sports slated often in the six-day meet that seeks to produce potential RP team members.

Many gold medals will be at stake in the swimplaza trials and field events, including the boys' 5,000-meter and girls' 5,000m runs. Opening matches in softball, badminton, chess, judo and table tennis are also scheduled for the day.

Archery, gymnastics, karatedo, tennis and powerlifting will get going tomorrow, sanda and Greco-roman wrestling on Monday and taekwondo and freestyle wrestling Tuesday.

Other sports in the games are indoor and beach volleyball, basketball, softball and aquatic sports.

Rizal Mainstay Oriental Gov. Dawn Ahorro and PSC chair Robert Aventajado presided over yesterday's opening ceremony featuring the parade of participants and torch relay at the core cobblestoned track of the complex.

A highlight of the show was a big production number honoring the three parades of Mindanao—the Chavacano, Maulana and Lumads.

Leading the special guests were Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. and Philippine Sports Commission chair Willeen "Butch" Ronquillo.

Also present were national sports association presidents and POC director executive chair Vicente Chavez.

A total of 470 gold, 422 silver and 410 bronze medals will be contested.

CAGAYAN de Oro's Mikael Alvarado, gold medalist in the Lanao del Norte PCR will be among the athletes in search of the jumbo flame. —NOEL ALCOSEBA

Asistio 3 up in Sabah Jr. Masters

ASISTIO

TENGUN ASISTIO notched par 72 to grab a three-stroke lead over Malaysian Ahmmister Lee halfway through the fourth Sabah International Junior Masters Wednesday at the Sabah Golf and Country Club in Sabah, Malaysia.

Asistio, winner of the Boy Regional Am Championship in the United States, shot two birdies against the same number of bogeys to grab the lead in the 54-hole premier boys' 19-21 division.

Together with his opening four-over 76, the top GTM graduate has posted a 148 for a three-shot lead over Lee, who finished with a 79 for a 151.

Wilson Chee, the first day co-leader, limped home with a 77 for a 153.

Sarah Abalos, winner of the recent Boracay invitational, shot a 77 but remained on top of the leader board in a tie with Kelly Tee in the girls' 13-15 bracket.

Abalos, who had a 76 in the first day, had a 158 total like Tee, who made an 84. An other Malaysian, Vivienne Chiu, carded an 86 for third at 160.

In the boys' 16-18 class, Mohdzlan Feang of Malaysia carded a 74 and stayed way out front with a 145, eight shots ahead of Kenneth de Silva, who had a 76 for 153. Abel Tan second third at 152 after a 78.

Christie Hsieh, shooting a 80h 10h this year, retained a 78 for 158 to lead the way Lee by three in the premier girls' 16-18 championship.

Lee also had a 78 for a 159. Louise Hsiao is in third with a 79 for third with a 318.

Almeda is Subic King of the Hill

ALMEDA: Quotes

JOEY ALMEDA POSTED THE quickest time to seal the King of the Hill Trophy in the record Manila Sports Car Club and the Mario Club's Subic Hill Climb Race.

Almeda capped in a race best of 39.24 seconds in ruling the Japanese Sports Cars FI category, beating Rishi Grewal (40.322) and Arbet Cuenco (41.136), in this event held in cooperation with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Nelly Rawal topped the European Cars class with a time of 42.06 seconds, followed by Alan Guevarra (44.13) and Jun Bautista at 47.716.

Alfy Andres ruled the Japanese Cars category in 43.65 with Ben Agregado settling for second in 46.17 and Marlyn Marcado third in 55.

Jaime Silva, Coordinator

By Top Choice
A) San Lazaro LP

Race 1—(10)Tito—Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 2—(4)Bullet—(9)Tito—(8)Bill (3), Bullseyebreaker (1), Speed Maker (5), Majestic Quest (2), Sun And Rain (7)

Race 3—(5)Tito—(2)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 4—(3)Tito—(1)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 5—(7)Tito—(4)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 6—(6)Tito—(3)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 7—(9)Tito—(5)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 8—(2)Tito—(7)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 9—(1)Tito—(8)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

Race 10—(8)Tito—(6)Hughie (6), Handy Shadow (7), Lady's Lady Rose (2), Lady Gold (5)

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Editor Raul G. Manoto ■ Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

Peso gains on back of remittances

Currency's strong showing may lead BSP to cut rates

By Doris C. Dumlao

A SURGE IN REMITTANCES FROM OVERSEAS Filipinos ahead of the holidays lifted the peso toward the 47-level against the US dollar for the first time in about two months.

The local currency closed at its intra-day high of 47.78, gaining a hefty 89.47 from Wednesday's finish of 48.25 against the greenback.

The worst strengthening of the peso versus the greenback, along with the wave of interest rate cuts across the region, may prompt the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to cut its overnight borrowing rate by 25-50 basis points during its next policy rate setting on Dec. 18, investment bank UBS said in a new country outlook.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said remittances from overseas Filipinos were boosting foreign exchange inflows to the country, thereby supporting the peso.

"The favorable start in remittances is also a big factor in the stronger performance of the peso against the US dollar," he said.

The market is now confident that inflation is on the wane, after peaking in August, and welcomes the deceleration to single-digit levels ahead of expectations in November, Guinigundo said.

Volume at the Philippine Dealing System surged to $747 million from the previous day's $61.3.3 million.

Nine other currencies across the region also rose against the US dollar yesterday as offshore investors started picking up bargains among regional stocks, currencies and bonds, dealers said.

Yesterday, share prices closed 1.3 percent lower due to heavy selling in index heavyweight Philippine Long Distance Telephone, dealers said.

The composite index fell 3.7 points to 1,900.32. However, the all-shares index rose 0.7 percent to 1,225.68 points.

There were 51 gainers against 37 losers and 47 unchanged.

Volume rose to two billion shares worth P1.13 billion ($44.3 million).

"What accounted for the big drop in the composite index was the big move on PLDT," said George Ching of Citimerchant.

PLDT, which accounted for 37.7 percent Thursday's turnover value, fell 4.6 percent to P1,175.

"There isn't any negative news that drove PLDT lower," Ching said. "But in recent weeks, it has rebounded. So it is more of profit-taking in PLDT than any company-specific news that came up." With a report from AFP

3,000-hectare property to rise in Laguna Lake

By Dorris L. Laca

AN AMBITIOUS PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT is set to rise along the Taguig City shoreline of Laguna de Bay that will include mixed-use residential, commercial and recreational zones, as well as an international airport.

Dubbed the Lakeshore Project, the development calls for the reclamation of 3,000 hectares of land from the 90,000-hectare lake, on which will rise what planners call a "city within a city."

Once completed, the project is expected to rival the Port Bonifacio Global City site in Taguig for business activity.

"This project will transform the face of, not only Metro Manila, but the entire country," Taguig City Mayor Freddie Tinga said during a press briefing.

The local government of Taguig is partnering with the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) for the construction of a 30.5-km coastal dike, under the financial catalogue of the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP).

The conceptual design is being undertaken by architectural firm Palafox and Associates.

The projected cost of reclamation stands at P1 million per hectare, or a total of P3 billion, just to displace the lake water from the planned development site.

Total cost of the project will depend on value the private developers decide to build on the site.

LLDA general manager Edgardo Manda said that the planned international airport would be a good alternative to the existing Ninoy Aquino International Airport, which is set to be full.

Manda also shrugged from about the environmental impact of the Lakeshore Project, saying that it will help preserve the Laguna Lake's condition rather than degrade it.

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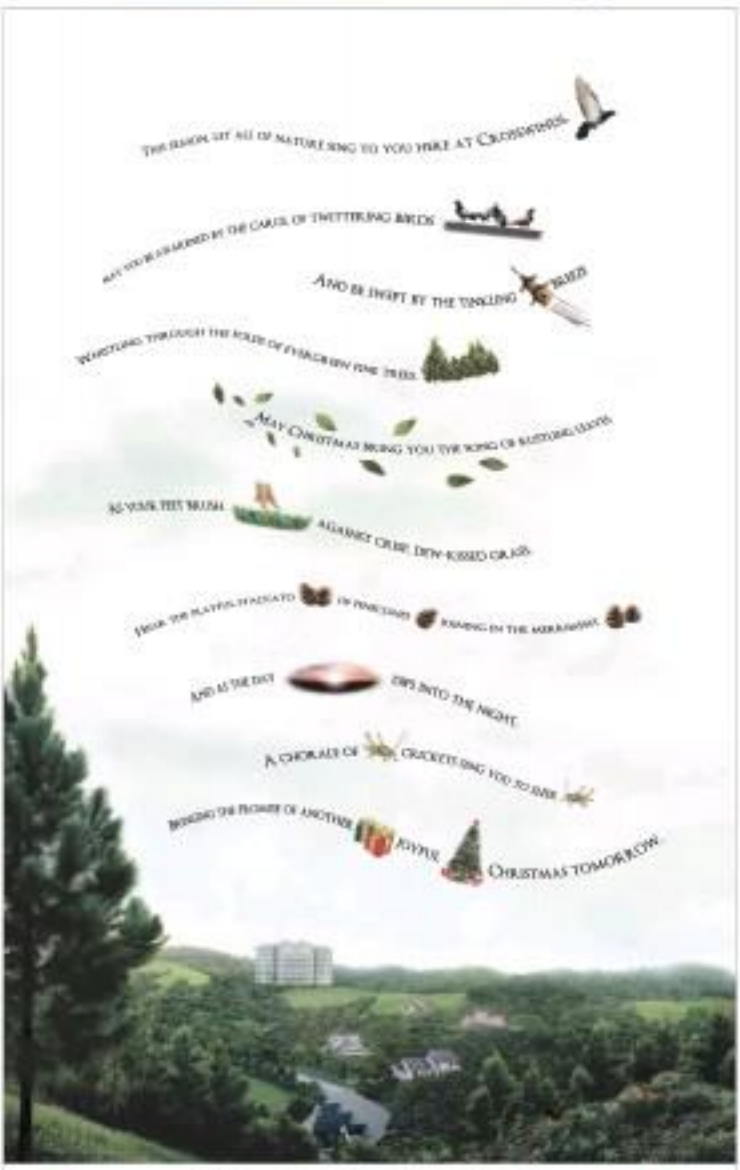

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CROSSWINDS
There's time to waste here

Tender offer

IF RECENT EVENTS IN THE LOCAL corporate community are used as basis, reports about an impending global financial meltdown seem to be exaggerated.

In October, San Miguel Corp. agreed to buy the 27-percent stake of the Government Service Insurance System in Meralco at P90 per share or P16 billion, payable over a three-year period.

Early this month, Global 8000 Investments Corp. acquired the 30 percent shareholdings of government financial institutions in the Luzon-controlled company at the same valuation, or for P9.9 billion, payable in 2012.

Early this week, the government sold its 40 percent stake in Petron Corp. to Aramco Investment Management LLC for P125.64 billion.

As soon as this sale is completed, Aramco, which is set to own 80 percent of Petron, plans to sell 50.1 percent of its shares to SMC for the same price.

It is time when the international credit market is suffering the jitters about the future, these moves are manifestations of confidence in the viability of Meralco and Petron despite the anticipated worldwide business slowdown.

Although these transactions may be sources of pride for small stockholders, they certainly watch and wait as the new investments take over and decide on the fate of their companies.

Threshold

The small stockholders are not totally out of the picture when substantial amounts of shares of stocks of public companies change hands.

Public companies are compelled to offer shares are traded in the stock exchange, to have assets worth at least P50 million and a minimum of 200 stockholders who own at least 100 shares each.

The rules provide that if a party wants to acquire 20 percent or more of the shares of a public company it is obliged to disclose such intention and, at the same time, offer to buy that percentage of shares from all the stockholders without discrimination.

The same requirement also applies when the acquisition is intended to be made within a 12-month period, or what is described as "creeping acquisition."

And if the purchase is less than 20 percent but would result in the buyer getting 51 percent of the company's stocks, the obligation to make a tender offer remains and, what's more, expands to cover all the outstanding stocks.

The mandatory offer is aimed at preventing the major stockholders from dealing directly with takeover of buyers for the sale of their stocks called for a price higher than their book values without the knowledge of the other stockholders.

Once the buyer has acquired the desired number of shares, they can ignore the rest of the stockholders.

In the process, the minority shareholders are deprived of the opportunity to sell their shares for a higher price, or if they're uncomfortable with the new controlling investors are forced to sell out even at a loss.

Avoidance

Prospective buyers of big chunks of stocks cannot be faulted if they purposely avoid reaching the 35 percent benchmark either by reducing their purchase by a few percentage points or encouraging a "friendly" corporation to buy for its own account the rest of the stocks.

The costs of complying with the filing requirements of a tender offer, and accompanying lawyers' and accountants' fees, are not cheap.

In addition to submitting the necessary reports to the Securities and Exchange Commission, the prospective buyer has, among others, to publish in two newspapers of general circulation the terms and conditions of its offer.

When the rights come in, the buyers is obliged to review the documents submitted and determine the eligibility of the stocks offered for sale to the tender offer.

If the tender offer is oversubscribed, the buyer has to take up and pay for the shares on a pro rata basis, according to the number of shares offered by each shareholder.

In case the buyer had earlier entered into agreements with any of the stockholders, he should make a proportional distribution on the shares to acquire with those persons and the rest of the stockholders.

Controversy

Oversubscription could pose some problems to buyers with excess deep pockets.

The stockholders whose offered shares are rejected, either for failure to meet certain criteria or meet the deadline to accept the offer, may question the manner by which the shares were chosen.

If the aggrieved stockholder goes to the media to air his grievances, the buyer could find itself in a sticky image public relations problem. Worse, if the legal route is taken, the entire transaction may be put on hold until the issue is ironed out.

This is a risk or contingency that companies take into consideration when they buy into businesses that have persons accounts of profitability.

For buyers with ample financial resources, the problem can be worked it by simply paying off all those who want to unload their stocks as long as they understandably meet the requirements of the tender offer.

But the solution will not apply to late. Reasonably cautioned buyers that buy stocks for investment purposes only or to establish a beachhead relationship with parties companies to establish a beachhead relationship with parties companies that is valued to its business.

As the saying goes, why buy the whole cow when getting a part of it will already serve the purpose.

(For feedback, please write to corporatesecretary@inquirer.com.ph/cs.)

ADB sees developing Asia's economic growth slowing

By Dario C. Damiso

THE PHILIPPINES AND THE rest of Asia's emerging economies must brace for a deeper, prolonged global recession that would likely send more pressure on the region's financial system and dampen growth in 2009, according to a report of the Asian Development Bank.

In the December issue of the Asia Economic Monitor, the ADB said the Philippines, after posting a 11-year high growth in gross domestic product of 7.1 percent last year, would likely grow at a slower pace of 4.5 percent this year and 3.5 percent next year.

This growth outlook was in line with the 3.5-percent average growth expected by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Growth in emerging East Asia—the 10-member Asean plus the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Taipei, and the Republic of Korea—was seen slowing to 5.7 percent in 2009, down from a likely 6.9 percent this year.

With the global economy being a major downturn, the region's economic resilience will be tested by weakening exports and a sharp reduction in capital inflows.

Jong-Wha Lee, head of ADB's office of regional economic integration said, "2009 is likely to be a difficult year for developing Asia but it will be manageable if countries respond decisively and collectively."

"Swift action by policymakers to stem both the threat to the financial systems and the real economy will allow most of the region's economies to sustain a healthy if slower expansion," Lee added.

Illustrating the growth momentum in domestic demand is key to keeping the regional economy in good shape despite a weak external environment, it said.

China, the region's growth engine, is expected to post an 8.5-percent growth in 2009 from 9.5 percent in 2008.

While the region's economies and financial systems are fundamentally sound, the report noted with concern that the global credit crunch was now spilling over into domestic banking systems, squeezing funding sources for corporate investment, and could lead over to more unemployment and weaker household incomes.

If banks in the region become more risk averse, the report warned then monetary policies are may have less traction than in the past and governments will have to develop more active fiscal response to throw up domestic demand.

The ADB urged policymakers in the region to adopt the following measures:

- Step up monitoring of banks' financial markets and have close policies in dealing with financial institutions.
- Provide adequate provisions of foreign and domestic liquidity.
- Consider a range of policies to contain the spillover effects of the worsening financial conditions and risks arising from weaker growth in regional banking systems.
- Improve regulation and oversight of financial systems.

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Portfolio	Current Fund (December 10, 2008)	Unit Value (December 11, 2008)
Bond Fund - Peso	1.08109	1.08447
Managed Fund - Peso	1.06179	1.06179
Growth Fund - Peso	1.02813	1.01109
Equity Fund - Peso	0.96179	0.96179
Bond Fund - Dollar	1.007	1.007

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RP firms ready for '09 growth

By Roland W. Dennigo

MANY LOCAL MANUFACTURERS EXPECT to increase their capital expenses as they feel they will do well despite the global financial crisis, according to Grant Thornton International Business Report (IBR) 2008.

Eloy Navarro, managing partner and chief executive of Punongbayan & Araullo, a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd., said the optimism was due to the relatively resilient economies in Asia compared to those of the United States, Japan and Europe.

Navarro said the world financial crisis opens up significant opportunities for local businesses because firms from the mature markets are keen on reducing costs.

"One way companies can go about doing that is to move investments from more developed countries to alternative locations where the cost of doing business is significantly lower," he said. "The Philippines is one alternative for these investors."

Navarro said that based on IBR 2008 findings, 69 percent of local manufacturers reported an increase in employment in the past year, while the first report/2009 reported the modest employment growth.

"There was also a significant rise in the Philippines' meta—from 40 percent to 60 percent—of manufacturers who expect to increase investments spending on plant and machinery," he added.

Navarro also cited latest data from the National Statistics Office which showed that total manufacturing output posted strong growth in September, increasing by double digits—11.5 percent and 19.7 percent, respectively—in both volume and value terms.

"We are in a good position to attract those investors who are looking for the most cost-efficient way to stay in business," he said.

"While subsidy is necessary to the downturn, we have to within our means to keep the economy resilient," he added.

Navarro said that amid talks in the business community about investors looking at both Vietnam and the Philippines as alternative sites to China because of the recent financial meltdown, local stakeholders must get their act together and package the country as an attractive, viable alternative destination.

"Even the bare optimistic economic projection still predicts that the Philippines will grow by 1.8 percent next year," the Phil chief said.

He said there were many projects underway that should at least keep the economy going for the next six months.

"After that, election spending will start to runout and if the government pushes through with major infrastructure projects that are in the pipeline now, we will be able to weather this economic storm," he said. "We will not do great but it will not be too bad either."

BUSINESS Friday

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Designer jeans, thy name is Viktor

PHO Cabuay

Denim brand off to invade foreign shores

By Chupeta Medina
Inquirer Intern

IF THERE IS ONE thing you can be sure about Ino Cabuay, it's his extensive knowledge of jeans. The founder of Viktor Denim Republik Inc., Ino is a self-confessed serial jeans collector. "I have about a hundred pairs of jeans," he admits. And these are not your commercial mall-available brands.

Ino's passion became a tangible reason why he became an entrepreneur five years ago. Many in his collection, while conveying premium and exclusive brands, did not fully fit his expectations. "I ended up wearing them to fine jeans store and cover tights," he says.

The other reason why he chose to buy his own materials and have them custom-made was the cost. Good Italian or European jeans were often priced in five figures. His marriage as a graphic designer was as much for his fashion aspiration. "I saw that as an opportunity to save money," says Ino.

"Sourcing denim is like cloth, brought them to Marikina where all those bike jeans tailors worked, offered to pay them double their rates as long as they stuck to my meticulous sewing and cutting instructions," he says.

Premium pricing

Friends liked the custom-designed jeans they saw on his avid physical cadres. Taking advantage of the opportunity, Ino put a name on the jeans.

First, it was the Viktor tag. Then, to differentiate age segments, Ino introduced Viktor Junior for the youth aged 12 and below, and Viktorino for children. Recently, to establish his premium brand, Lord Viktor was born.

"The is the higher-priced jeans cut only because of the more expensive materials but even the sewing process," he says.

Capitalizing on the trend, Viktor jeans set out to enrich a new market that he saw was largely untapped. Like most party animals, Ino and his friends wore fashionable dresses, who would pay for good quality clothing at premium pricing, even if there were locally made.

Doing indeed became one of the differentiating factors in Ino's business. He opened a new market in the country among fashionistas, who were willing to buy a pair of branded jeans that was not as expensive as those sizzling out from apparent denim clothing houses in Japan, the United States and Europe, but were well made.

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Business model: Key to market success, beating competition, p

(Second of two parts)

IF YOU'RE HAVING A HARD time searching for a business model, then work backward. Find out the customer behavior process leading to product acceptance. The business model then becomes evident from that uncovered customer model.

When you approach the search this way you must be open to the likelihood that some other consumer model will come out as the correct one. The customer loyalty model may or may not even be among those outlined. A well published and very illustrative case in the airline industry is worth reviewing here.

We refer to the case of Ireland's Ryanair, an airline that the Ryan family put up in 1985. When the European airline industry deregulated in 1997, Ryanair found itself near bankruptcy. According to Newsweek International (Dec. 31, 2001 issue), Ryanair appointed its finance consultant, Michael O'Leary as CEO as part of its turnaround strategy.

The story goes that O'Leary's first move was to benchmark against Southwest Airlines in Dallas. After learning how Southwest Airlines executed, O'Leary is said to have adopted the Southwest Airline success as Ryanair's business model: low fares, new aircraft, high load factors and use of secondary airports.

There was only one Southwest practice that O'Leary did not adopt. This concerned customer service.

O'Leary is known to be a skeptic about customer service value. His view is backed by research that says that according to frequent youth and economy passengers, the primary and almost sole driver for customer choice of airline in this passenger segment is low, low fares.

No frills

So O'Leary followed a consumer model of "no frills, no customer service, very low price" (Fast Seasoned's headline in its Oct. 4, 2004 issue questioned: "Is This Any Way to Run an Airline?"

And yet, the European airline industry saw Ryanair posting record growth and enviable profit over a sustained period of time, linked to riders on his business model of and consumer model. O'Leary in a 2004 Wall Street Journal interview was reported to have said: "It's head to head competition, low prices will always beat any value services." Does? yes, think you have something of a magic significance in learn from O'Leary?

In this case then, the correct consumer model underlying the correct business model was this: "Low price versus competition is the driver to business success and profitability; not satisfying customer service for building customer loyalty."

Of course, this is not to say that customer loyalty does not matter. It is simply saying that for a given target customer segment with a given set of priorities, customer loyalty does not drive revenue and much less profitability. This actually reminds us of the current market condition and primary customer segment in the highly competitive telecom industry.

Why added services fail

It is public knowledge in the business community that all telcos (Smart, Globe and Sun) get more than 90 percent of their revenue from prepaid customers and less than 10 percent or even less than 5 percent from the postpaid subscribers. The prepaid market segment is motivated almost totally by price and price discounts that come in the form of varying consumer promos and incentives.

This is why offers from the telcos of ever growing number of "value added services" (VAS) have continuously been problematic failures. O'Leary's Ryanair knew and immediately acted on that consumer reality.

In order to be telco industry, be a long as the prepaid market segment dominates the total telco market, value services cannot take the primary motivating role that price and price discount play. Value services take over the lead motivator role once the postpaid market segment starts to cover the prepaid segments in the industry's revenue split.

So to summarize our prescription here in choosing your guiding business model, we underscore the following:

1. Bring out the uncertain **consumer behavior model** underlying your chosen business model for revenue raising and **profitability.** Remember any business model makes us as

SA NEGOSYO,
BAWAL ANG MABAGAL

Designer jeans ...

From page B1-1

By paying P2,000-P9,000 more, Viktor clients were able to buy perfectly fit jeans in each their taste, and still be comfortable wearing them as it was molded to their body without fear of bumping into someone dressing the same designer pair.

The Gold Viktor tag, which sells for P5,000-P7,000 more than the ordinary Viktor jeans that go for P1,000 to P3,000 each, likewise found a clientele base that preferred only the best materials and workmanship.

Guis' places

With the growing number of customers queuing for their fitting, Inch carefully designed corner in his condo unit because too small. This was when he decided to open a shop in The Podium, an upscale mall in the Ortigas business district. Incidentally, this also encouraged him to pursue a ready-to-wear line.

Moving to The Podium gave the business more accessibility, not only with his long-standing clients, but with new customers, who would patronize other shops at the high-end mall.

In early 2007, one year after Inch opened Viktor in The Podium, he brought the brand to the newly-opened TriNoma. Sales were low in the first few months, which Inch attributed to the fact that the mall was relatively new and the specific location of the jeans shop was not the most ideal.

Geo Associates had become an unnamed with Viktor jeans that he proposed to bring the brand to Sydney. That's now in the pipeline, although Inch says he has already started shipping jeans by the bulk to the site.

This month, Viktor will definitely

GS, Instagreen, who do not quibble too much about the cost of a pair of jeans, and trained are happy with good quality fabric and make," says the 30-year-old jeans designer.

Geo Associates had become an unnamed with Viktor jeans that he proposed to bring the brand to Sydney. That's now in the pipeline, although Inch says he has already started shipping jeans by the bulk to the site.

This month, Viktor will definitely be in Singapore's pricey Bintk Timah, a boutique that is known to carry exclusive brands. "I have always believed in thinking big. I had dreamed of Viktor in Asia. I continue to dream of Viktor to the world," he says.

Responsible employer

Now that Inch has with firmly chosen the path of entrepreneurship, he has also opted to don the role of a socially responsible provider to his employees and family. "My three pillars and their husbands are part of the business. And my employees are part of the family," he says.

There is even a three-story building in Antipolo, where his atelier and production line are located. Many of the people who work with him are the original staff—cutters, sewers, fitters—who followed wherever the business was just starting. And Inch intends to keep these people for as long as he can.

The growing responsibility perhaps is also the reason why he cannot stop commuting.

"Yes, here to have a new idea every month. Never be complacent," he says.

Time enough, there is always something new in his shops.

Through it all, despite the demands of the business on him, Inch says he continues to enjoy what he is doing. "You have to have a passion for your business. This is what keeps me going."

A different kin of toy store

From page B1-4

ate high displays. Instead, we have more low modular displays that can be easily reached."

The new store design makes use of pastel colors which double as category guides to make it easier for the children to find the toys they are most interested in. The pathways are fully carpeted for their protection. The atmosphere is kids-fixation outlets can be likened in a toy land. It make it look roomier, the store adopted the modern high-ceiling design. They also installed urban and widened pathways.

"We want the people to know that we want them to feel at home and not lost," Rodriguez said.

"It's an open and clean environment that welcomes the children and parents into a comfortable and relaxed store," Gonzales said.

Gonzales also announced the new concept to the store's 16 branches, which total, of which about four franchise stores. The stores are the ones in the adults and/or t

He said Rich store its custom strategic acqu stores to our market, then t these customer

On top of the booths in-store games every m drive can make enjoy the way

Rodriguez s are more than could see. Th can be felt that

Although th 3D displays, K the children they are in the honest filled adult

profitability

...suspicion about the consumer behavior that leads to market success and profitability.

2. This validates if this assumed consumer model has the correct consumer behavior process that will lead to the targeted raised revenue and profit. If it's not validated, it means you should search for the true consumer model.

3. Follow the correct consumer behavior process and ensure that as the right consumer model to follow in growing your business and increasing profitability. Need less to say, this one and more correct consumer model corresponds to a different business model.

4. You can also validate the first available business model by some subsequent business model that challenges the first model's validity. This is the case we saw when Benetton and Levi's continually challenged the popular Battlefield and Jeans customer loyalty business model. So if you are to consult a marketing professor on this alternative validation approach, make sure that the professor is up-to-date and current about his/her marketing knowledge.

5. If you're uncertain about the correct business model, take the alternative of answering the correct business model by working backward. For example, research the consumer behavior process leading to increased revenues and profits and compare this consumer model's counterpart business model.

Keep your questions coming. Feel free to us at MarketingDevelopment@yahoo.com or you may also visit www.marketingdev.org.

Ad agents do good deed for nature

BILLBOARDS TRACE ITS ROOTS TO 3000 BC

...far back as 3000 years ago in Ancient Egypt in the form of a tall stone obelisk used by merchants to promote their goods.

Today, its use has invariably remained the same—a tool for advertisement.

2nd Media—the public affairs arm of the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP)—wrote a new chapter in billboards' history with the launch of the Manila Outdoor Gallery Art Route.

"For the longest history has always required change by always going beyond the frame," says Dondie Puerto, 2nd Media spokesperson.

"Together with OAAP as site for the Manila Outdoor Gallery Art Route is for a catalyst for change in the media by pushing the boundaries of what billboards can be," Puerto adds.

Dubbed as the biggest outdoor gallery in Asia, it features artworks from 13 of the most promising Filipino artists such as Hopo Sin Awyan, Ged Alkuin, Eddie Boy Guerrero, Jose Tence Ruiz, Dante V. Bernardo, Liad Bumatay, MDF Ni, Lotsi Nunez and Christian Quimentiya Rambo who together with Tina Hernandez of Architectural created the exhibit.

Sharing a theme that highlights environmental awareness, the artwork is key landmarks across the metro beginning from Commonwealth, Edsa up to NLEx, supports the international movement to conserve nature.

"Can you imagine a better way to drive your message across than to evoke sentiments from passersby?" says Puerto.

Also through the Manila Outdoor Gallery Art Route, 2nd Media and the OAAP aim to raise awareness that billboards are effective channels for communication and are not just tools for advertising.

Aside from bringing art to the people, the Manila Outdoor Gallery Art Route also complements the initiatives of the local government toward uplifting the country's urban landscape.

To see more of the billboards, visit www.outdoorgallery.com.ph.

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Haute Coupure? Luxury buyers scent bargains

PARIS/MILAN—IN COUTURE, CUT IS VITAL, but Slade Dupuis has found it can also apply to price. Thanks to a little bargaining, a Jean Paul Gaultier dress she had her eye on for New Year's Eve was here at a 40 percent discount.

The 32-year-old Parisian registered surprise at her 3,116-euro ($4900) swap.

"I have never seen that," she said. "It must be because of the crisis everybody is talking about."

Attainable luxury

The "haute" bargain is usually reserved for the super rich or celebrities, who obtain prestige fashion for free from houses keen for the publicity that an extra hands-to-mouth, cheaper luxury has become attainable to more ordinary shoppers.

With mainstream ranges under pressure as sinking fight for a share of shrinking pre-Christmas budgets, the couture house created by Jean-Paul Gaultier is just one upmarket brand to jump on the promotional bandwagon.

From Paris to Milan and New York to London, a strong pickup in promotional sales of recent weeks has come to include even formerly bruised. In retail generally, the season can account for about 40 percent of annual sales, as the traders are fond.

But the high-end offers are subtle.

Instead of advertising discounts in shop windows—which can damage the brand by undermining the notion that quality comes at a price—they have been luring buyers with discreet "private sales," some of them realities this year than last.

Sonia Rykiel, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Jimmy Choo, Prada, Armani, Escal, Tod's, Dolce & Gabbana, Alexander McQueen, Gianfranco Ferre and Alberta Ferretti have been offering discounts or holding private sales, but not as many stores or in every country.

Tolerated by regulators outside the traditional January and July seasons, private sales are usually exclusively reserved to loyal customers, who receive announcements by mail. The discounts typically apply to small selection of items.

This year, Reuters reporters found one could buy a wide range of discounted products online or in-store at Jean-Paul Gaultier and Jimmy Choo in Paris and Prada in Milan.

"We do not have any company to make short- private sales," a spokesperson for Jean-Paul Gaultier said. "It's down to individual shops to decide them."

Other brands including Gucci and Armani declined comment. A Prada spokesperson said private sales were usual at this time of year but declined further details.

"Our policy is that we do not give information about our commercial activities," said a spokesperson for Gucci Group, which also includes Bottega Veneta and Yves Saint Laurent.

Private sales

Italy's Altagamma fashion industry association said it had noted an increase in the number of private sales this year due to the financial crisis, but pointed out they are a long-standing tradition for many fashion houses.

In Old Bond Street in London, Avenue Montaigne in Paris and in Milan's Quadrilatero d'Oro (Golden Quadrangle), customers arrive first and 1st January—an event diary at the end of November and early December, even though Christmas approached.

"I am more excited this year with my money," said Jean-Michel Pasquet, 35, a French aerospace executive buying a 250-euro Hermes leather bracelet as a gift to Paris. "We are all worried about the economy and our job."

With job cuts since September at 533,000 and rising, corporate executives slimming bonuses and oligarchs from Russia to India watching their fortunes sink down, luxury customers' behavior has changed.

The consumerism, ephemeral or frivolous has been replaced by an urge for quality and strong brands, industry specialists say. As the collapse of financial markets has narrowed investment options, this is not all about consumption.

Demand persists for "bespoke"—or custom-made—goods from tailored suits to specially commissioned fine jewels.

"There is a drive toward timeless, very high-end brands," said Pierre Mallevergne, a partner at luxury investment banking boutique Lexington Partners. "If you buy a Louis Vuitton bag, you know that it will not lose much value but if you buy another brand, you are not so sure."

Louis Vuitton and Hermes said they never conduct private sales. But trading leaked back on to eve- ones to their shops.

Analysts predict luxury revenues will drop in 2009 for the first time in more than a decade as consumer exchange rates.

Promotional environment

Consultants at Bain & Co. say global luxury sales could drop as much as 7 percent next year, while analysts at Bernstein see forecasting a 3- percent decline.

Industry observers said retail-store shops were more severely hit by the spending contraction than department stores.

French fashion designer Jean-Louis Scherrer earlier this month extended a 60-percent promotional sale on evening dresses that is reserved to mid-November. Unypical, it advertised the fact in the window of its shop off the Champs-Elysees. Reuters

BUSINESS Friday

A different kind of toy store

KIDZ Station has transformed over, if not all of its earlier, into a haven for children

By Florini D. Salazar

FINDING A WAY TO THE CHILDREN'S heart is easy. They love to play and they love toys. Bring them to a mall and they will surely drag you to the nearest toy shop in sight. Even that Chatterbox Guy is just around the corner, toys abound in every alley, nanggas, and every nook and cranny in the metropolis.

But there are toy shops that pride themselves in being not just a buy-and-run store. Some of them have changed their concepts and adopted innovations that would ensure the toys would be enjoyed to the fullest by kids and would not just be kept in the box and displayed in the shelves forever.

Kidz Station, which started operating in the country in 2000, is one of those stores. Over the years, Kidz Station has made changes in its concepts and designs that transformed now, if not all, of its outlets into a haven for children. These outlets provide the customers a home-like environment where kids are free to run around, sit on the floor and try out the toys the store is selling.

This concept creates an inviting and pleasant atmosphere, which differentiates Kidz Station from competitors, says Kidz Station president Jaime Gonzales.

The store veers away from the traditional warehouse-type atmosphere, according to Jaime. Besides, Kidz Station's marketing and merchandising manager "There are no overwhelming mas-

A COMPANY 611

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On weekends, keep everyday choices at bay in an executive studio or a one- to two-bedroom unit. At the nearby play deck, you can the shots on how you want to unwind. Fine-tune your fitness at the swimming pool complex with a sand deck, basketball/tennis court, gym, game room and outdoor spa. And fast-forward what nature's gifts to a palm court, landscaped sun deck, rolling grass and gardens and fountain plaza.

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BUSINESS Friday

Keeping loyal customers happy

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

SHOPPERS ARE UNDERstandably more reluctant to get cash out of their wallets these days because of widespread predictions that the Philippines is in for dark days given the global economic downturn.

So it's still for oldtimers to rest in new and cash-strapped customers, it will pay to keep the loyal clients happy so that they will not have second thoughts about buying yet another piece of outdoor gear, like a pair of pants and shoes designed to battle the elements.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Loyalty campaign

At least this is the belief of the Prince Group, exclusive distributor of Columbia Sportswear Co. products, which is why it is putting more resources behind its loyalty campaigns to push sales in 2009.

"There will be two main strategies for Columbia next year. The first is to create a more intimate relationship with our Platinum members or key customers," explains Columbia brand manager Dino de Leon. "This will be done via events and a web-based community exclusively for them."

"Brand loyalty is something we always strive for and take pride in. This strategy is one of the many reasons we are doing to enhance that," De Leon adds.

The second strategy is to focus its marketing campaigns around what sets Columbia products apart from the rest so that customers will be more aware of what they are actually paying for.

"One of the key technologies we're highlighting is the Omni-Shade rebuilt, in the current elements we're experiencing, is not a luxury segment but a necessity. And Columbia is incorporating this technology to the majority of our apparel line," De Leon explains.

Perfecting technology

Columbia's Omni-Shade apparel line includes 300 products for men, women and children that ensure protection against damaging ultraviolet rays.

The product labels indicate the intensity of the protection, from Good (Ultraviolet Protection Factor 15-24), Very Good (UPF 25-39) and Excellent (UPF 40 and above). Product prices vary accordingly.

With the Omni-Shade technology, Columbia is able to infuse ultraviolet ray protection into the very fiber of the products. This allows the outdoor apparel to block the majority of the sun's harmful rays so the wearer can stay out longer under the sun.

This is important for Columbia customers, who are usually travelers and lovers of the outdoors, such as photographers, trekkers, bird watchers and mountain climbers—especially so since the Philippines is in the tropics where the sun is out most of the time.

More effort was exerted in perfecting the technology and not so much in the design of the apparel, since the key buyers demand a no-nonsense functional product that delivers on its promise of protection against harmful sunrays that can lead to skin cancer.

"We make it a point that our customers understand and relate to how these can help them in their outdoor/travel pursuits. If we are successful in communicating this then that makes selling our products easier," De Leon says.

Seal of recommendation

As proof of its claims, Columbia got The Skin Cancer Foundation's Seal of Recommendation for its Omni-Shade line. The seal is awarded to clothing with a minimum UPF of 30.

Touting these benefits is Columbia's game plan for next year as the company adapts to more challenging times ahead.

De Leon is confident, however, that

KEEPING B3

GCASH strengthens partnership with RBAP and awards its top 10 Rural Bank partners

From L-R: IRABS Chief of Party John Sheets, USAID Deputy Mission Director Claudia Washington, RBAP President Tomas Gomez III, Globe Chairman Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, and Rural Bankers Research and Development Foundation Inc. (RBRDFI) Chairman Atty. Francis Gonzon

The GCASH partners received special awards from Globe Telecom's wholly-owned subsidiary, G-Xchange, Inc. (GXI). The awards for the 2008 Top 10 GCASH Rural Bank Partners using mobile banking services were handed out by Globe's Chairman, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala. The awards were given during the recent Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP) 51st Charter Anniversary Symposium.

The awardees were: Philippine Rural Banking Corporation, Green Bank, Camiban Bank, 1st Valley Bank, GM Bank, Agri Business Bank, Bangko Kabayan, Kang-Ay Bank, Bank Victorias, and Bangko Luzon.

GXI has partnered with the RBAP-Microenterprise Access to Banking Services (MABS) program which is a USAID supported initiative that provides technical assistance and training to rural banks to develop their capability to profitably provide banking services to microenterprise clients in the Philippines. Since 2005, RBAP-MABS has worked with GXI to use the GCASH platform to facilitate mobile phone banking services including loan disbursements and payments, deposits and withdrawals, money transfers, bill payments, and payroll processing.

Mt Bank President Tomas Gomez III and Camiban Bank President Gen. William Hotchkiss

Greenhand President Joseph Omar Andaya

RB Bank President Rodel Ho Mingoy being awarded by (L-R) IRABS Chief of Party John Sheets, GXI President Rhon Mendoza Ruiz and Globe Chairman Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala

(Upper L-R) 1V First Valley Bank President Atty. Nicolas Lim, Camiban Bank President Gen. William Hotchkiss, RB Victorias Vice President for Operations Mirth Planta, Bangko Luzon President Maria Fe Guerrero, GM Bank President Tomas Gomez IV

(Lower L-R) RB PR Bank President Rodel Ho Mingoy, Greenhand Chairman Emeritus Ismael Andaya, Kang-ay Bank President Ines Mesa, Agribusiness RB President Alfonso Rey Mingoy, Bangko Kabayan President Atty. Francis Gonzon

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SHOLDEX

Seminars on soap making, meat processing set

THE GOLDEN TREASURE SKILLS DEvelopment Program will conduct a oneday meat and fish-processing seminar at the College of Social Work and Community Development at Magsaysay Avenue, corner Tinsuro Street, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, on Dec. 13, Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are sourcing of materials and costing.

Participants will have hands-on experience in how to make sisaba, chicken longganisa, Chinese (camino) sausage, embutido, chicken nuggets, chicken and pork meatballs, hungrai deboning, fishball, fish fillets, fish fillet, fish burger, etc.

Bonus courses include making coconut beef, pork/tuna and squid ball.

The next day, Sunday, will feature a one-day seminar on soap making.

Participants will get to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, fan detergent soap, powder soap, bathe/bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, coconut, etc.), glycerin (transparent bath soap) and laundry detergent.

Bonus courses include making liquid bleach, fabric softener, tile and bowl cleaner, glass cleaner, air freshener, car shampoo and dye black.

Participants will receive a certificate of training after the session. Lunch and snacks will be served. Handouts and all materials will be provided.

For questions, call 436-74-26, 913-61-31 and 421-15-77.

Keeping loyal customers ...

From page B2-1

WILKINS are only go-anywhere that's known than one-trick ponies, they are also interested in top performance at reasonable prices.

Columbia will be able to step up to the challenge to deliver more value for money spent, particularly since Columbia products are now cheap with a pair of shoes going for over P1,500 each and a shirt selling for over P2,000.

Dr. Goon says, however, that the country is well spent since Columbia provides value, specifically the technology behind Columbia products that are suitable for the Philippines.

"While not all technologies apply to our environment, key technologies like Omni-Shade (UV protection), Omni-Tech (water-proof/breathable) and Techlite (lightweight footwear) are a perfect fit for our climate," he adds.

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Singapore Confirmed as Location for Spikes Asia the 1st Asian Advertising Festival

1st Festival to be held 16-18 September 2009

9 December, London – Singapore has been named as the location for Spikes Asia – 1st Asian Advertising Festival. The Festival is a joint venture between IAF, the organisers of Cannes Lions, Dubai Lynx & Eurobest and Haymarket, publishers of Media and Campaign.

The dates for the first Festival, which will run over 3 days, have been confirmed as 16-18th September 2009.

"Asia has emerged as a centre of creative excellence in the last 5 years producing some of the most outstanding work each year - it is fitting that organisations such as Cannes Lions and Haymarket support and drive a world class creative and networking event in the region. We will be fully engaged in producing an outstanding Festival", said Phil Thomas, CEO of Cannes Lions.

Tim Waldron, Managing Director of Haymarket Media in Asia said, "The level of support we are getting from the market indicates to us that the sense is right, the concept is right and in coming months, as announcements of what will be happening at the 1st Asian Advertising Festival becomes clear, the level of excitement will be right."

"We are delighted to have the long term support of the Singapore Tourism Board in staging this event in Singapore which was chosen for its superb infrastructure, easy travel access and its commitment to support creativity", commented Terry Savage, Chairman of Cannes Lions.

"We warmly welcome Spikes Asia to be held in Singapore. The event is well-timed providing the region's growing creative and advertising industry an opportune platform to network and exchange ideas, further driving the growth of this industry in the Asian region. Hosting Spikes Asia will add a boost to Singapore's drive to become a frontrunner in the region's creative industries cluster", said Mr Aloysius Arlando, Assistant Chief Executive, Business Travel and MICE Group, Singapore Tourism Board.

The event, which is its inaugural year will be held at Suntec City, will bring together some of the finest creative thinkers from across the region and globally.

Further details will be announced when the website www.spikesasia.com launches in Mid December.

INQUIRER

Stopping theft in its tracks

From page B3-1

rate components can suffer the same fate," she added.

According to PLDT SME, some of the more common incidents of theft in the office are left unnoticed, such as employees printing their children's homework and using office items such as paper, tape and batteries for personal needs.

In certain cases, some employees either goof off or do other jobs while at work.

"Millions are lost every day for each case of underworked chefs, waiters, pilferage or employees simply goofing off instead of working," the company said.

The PLDT Watcher is a video monitoring solution that uses an IP camera and hardened weaving software so that business owners can see their offices or sites through a laptop or PC connected by DSL or even a 3G mobile phone.

At an initial offer particularly for SME owners, PLDT has the Watcher 2000, a package wherein owners need to pay a monthly service fee of P3,000, an one-time installation fee of P500.

This package, which has a lock in period of one year, includes an IP/TCP IP Cam and viewing software.

The camera has a 1/4" Super CMOS sensor, 640x480 lens: 4.0 mm, up to 30FPS; a built-in microphone; MPEG4 compression; and 802.11 b/g WiFi that is SEP compliant.

The cameras are capable of sending video clips...pre-event...during event and post event sequences—using the e-mail every time the motion detect feature is triggered.

According to PLDT SME, this motion detector is one of the key features of the PLDT Watcher. When activated, the motion detectors prime the system to auto-record video images and e-mail snapshots direct to the user.

Users can likewise monitor multiple sites in one viewing.

"Through PC or laptop connected by DSL or even a 3G phone, they can easily check on their businesses—no matter how many or where they may be located. And the best thing about it is that they can view multiple work sites in just one viewing," Luisa Alabado added.

According to PLDT SME, ideal business sectors for the PLDT Watcher include retail trade establishments, restaurants, hotels, corporate buildings, and condominiums.

Some business owners may even opt to include the system for their private residences, which may also double as home offices.

Other benefits of using the Watcher include saving money on loss prevention; gathering indisputable evidence in cases of actual theft; and improving the bottom line.

Watcher also addresses a major concern for most businesses, which is shrinkage.

"By shoplifting, employee or supplier theft or even through processes, shrinkage is costing retailers worldwide billions of dollars," PLDT said.

"Besides, faster shrinkage to regain lost profit. Once the shrinkage stops, the profits rise. And with technological advancements, business owners can now win the fight against shrinkage through proven technology such as video surveillance, sales analytics and tagging," the company added.

According to officials, the Watcher takes surveillance a notch higher by making good use of wired and wireless Internet technologies, enabling entrepreneurs to literally keep a close eye on their businesses.

Café also brews freebies for clients

BOSTON. Cafe has become one of the favorite hang-out places in Los Baños.

By Karen Lapitan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—THE ACT OF frequently giving away freebies may be something strange for a high-end business, but for Boston Café, this customer-care strategy has led to its success barely a year into the business.

When Boston Café opened its doors and launch on Nov. 15, a long queue of customers greeted its owners, which only proved the patronage of its target market—students and professionals.

Eight young professionals who graduated from different reputable universities are behind the coffee shop that is now setting trends among similar businesses in town.

Michelle Catubay, 28; Lee Anthony Gogo, 28; Isabel Mendiondo, 29; Gary Baraan, 29; Francis Bernelle Alpas, 29; Macho Saliarta, 29; Elliot Castillo, 30; and Heidee Bellarte, 30, used to dream of a coffee shop similar to those where they always hang out.

Brewing the business

Friends, the eight owners of Boston Café decided to venture into the business, giving birth to Boston Café.

The café for now emerged as one of the favorite hang-out places in town, packing in students and professionals alike.

The owners of Boston Café invested around P1.4 million to make the coffee shop fully operational.

After a day of deliberation, they decided to name their business as such since they envisioned a local business that would introduce international blends and fine coffee to local residents.

Before the café formally opened, the owners had started experimenting on the different drinks that they could introduce.

Alpas, marketing director of Boston Café, recalled that in college, there is one coffee mate to be enough. But there are lesser types of coffee that students and professionals can drink.

Boston Café takes pride in introducing the international taste of coffee to every cup in Los Baños residents.

It was formally opened on April 8, 2007 at the Robinson's Town Mall in Los Baños. Last Nov. 15, a branch was opened a few meters away from the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

There are a lesser few coffee shops near Boston Café's new branch, but the owners do not treat these as competitors.

"We don't treat them (other local coffee shops) as competitors that could threaten our sales," said Alpas. Alpas added that the greatest challenge in putting up Boston Café was the introduction of Los Baños "as fine coffee."

Freebies

Boston Café has been popular in Los Baños for its unique marketing and customer care strategy.

Often, baristas of Boston Café give away free coffee, which management calls "Treasury Surprise."

Boston Café has also been popular for frequently giving away tumblers to customers.

When its second branch officially opened last November, the first 20 customers who ordered, received their free tumblers.

These do not include the other promotional activities in which they also give away freebies.

Customers who share their Boston Café experiences via the establishment's website also get something special in return.

Interestingly, Boston Café holds Open Café, an event where patrons can have free coffee.

Giving away products may not be the rash of most business owners, but the management of Boston Café has considered Open Café as a major factor in the success of their business.

At their second branch near UP-LB, Boston Café is also giving away blackberry mini bookmid and pens for free.

Boston Café also offers free Wi-Fi (wireless fidelity) connection to customers and allows them to charge their laptops in the café.

'Barista' benefits

Ballarte shared that they had also come up with benefited programs for their baristas.

The Boston Café management encourages baristas to save their earnings...something that would help them in cases of emergency.

The baristas are also given social security and health benefits.

Having succeeded in putting up their second branch in just after a year, the people behind Boston Café are now in the process of setting up more branches.

"We have also more plans for our loyal customers," Alpas said.

BUSINESS Friday

Stopping theft in its tracks

By Jerry R. Barrer

MANY ENTREPRENEURS would like nothing more than to keep an eye on their business 24 hours a day and 365 days a year, just to make sure that nothing gets lost in their office or stolen.

Closed circuit televisions do give the owner some peace of mind during normal business hours, but the entrepreneur will, however, have to constantly keep watch the screens and review the tapes if he wants to catch a thief.

Most likely, the entrepreneur will still be left clueless as to what goes on inside the office after he locks up and heads home.

This is why PLDT SME Solutions, attuned to the needs of big and small businesses alike, has come up with a product that may help entrepreneurs monitor the office even through a mobile phone.

Called the PLDT Watcher, it is a video monitoring solution that will allow entrepreneurs to monitor their offices anytime from anywhere, through their laptops and mobile phones.

"You can be in Acapulco and still know what your employees are doing," said Kat Luna-Abolusty, PLDT SME Station VP and head. "This is a good way for business owners to keep an eye on what's really happening to the office."

"Small or medium manufacturers can now keep an eye on their production line or more especially on their inventory warehouses where most losses occur," she said.

"It's a sad fact but direct or employee-assisted pilferage or theft of stocks still plagues these businesses. If it's not actual finished products, especially raw materials and supplies," she said.

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Cavite Economic Zone
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Cebu - Mactan MEPZ
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Metrobank goes into expansion – opens new domestic branches and ATM sites

Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company (Metrobank) revealed that it has further expanded its network of branches and automated teller machines (ATMs) as part of its strategy to grow retail customers and provide better service.

By the end of the year, Metrobank will have a total of 552 domestic branches while its ATM network will have grown to more than 900 ATMs. This is the most recent expansion program of the Bank within the last two years.

Fabian Dee, Metrobank executive vice president and National Branch Banking Sector head, said that the Bank remains optimistic about deposit growth even with the onset of the global economic slowdown. "Our branch network continues to demonstrate internal strength and competitiveness, delivering exemplary performance in generating low-cost deposits, consumer loans, and cross-sales of Metrobank subsidiary products," said Dee.

The Bank has extended the roll out of its sales and distribution program that featured re-engineered 49 branches into sales-driven units and service centers. The Bank is also actively promoting its electronic banking services to retail customers who can easily adapt to self-service channels like ATMs, phone banking and internet banking.

The bank earlier reported that its net interest income was solidly due to a combination of sustained volume growth and improved deposit mix. As of the quarter ended September 30, 2008, the bank's banking unit boosted by a 7.9 percent growth in deposits to P441.6 billion. Low-cost deposits was almost the deepest rising interest rates, as low cost deposits grew by 11.9 percent accounting for 49.6 percent of the total deposit base.

The increase in 4Q08 savings, meanwhile, has led to a corresponding increase in usage. By end-September 2008, Metrobank registered 49.4 million ATM transactions, with over 30% from use of Metrobank ATMs by local and international non-Metrobank cardholders. The Bank boasts of its current record of above average 99% service availability, among the highest within the Bank's comparators.

As of September 2008, Metrobank reported consolidated resources of P781.7 billion, while recording consolidated net income of P5.6 billion. The Bank's extensive network includes:

37 international branches and offices in 21 countries;

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LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

AT 2:30 A.M. AFTER the fight, Pacquiao, not allowed to sleep, rests in his suite with wife Jinkee and close friends.

Pacquiao, private time

IN THEIR DESPERATE NEED to find a hero, the Filipino people have so identified with Manny Pacquiao, the world's greatest boxer pound for pound today, that it seems fitting he should wear the Philippine flag.

Nike has exclusively designed for him a coat with the flag motif (whatever the constitutional ramifications). He was seen wearing it while signing autographs for fans and playing chess on strike himself before the fight with Oscar de la Hoya.

Nike also designed the wife Jinkee a

Her strongest 'accessory'

THE AMBASSADORS OF THE UNITED Nations' World Food Program (WFP) attended the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) in Hong Kong, including our Ambassador against Hunger, KC Concepcion.

Not only did the conference formulate solutions to help solve the problem of malnutrition in Asia, it also made commitments to improve the lives of children in eight countries, with an estimated value at US$100 million dollars.

The gala dinner had an A-list crowd that included Michelle Yeoh and Jet Li. Of course, the main attraction was Bill Clinton himself.

While everyone's eyes were on BC's gorgeous curves by Lulu Tan Gan, one could say that it was KC's big, generous heart that she wore best that night.

Our KC style guide: From A to Z

Everything you've always wanted to know about this media darling and UN ambassador

Jessi Epperson

WE WATCHED HER GROW UP TO become the style icon she is today

From media darling to UN ambassador to fresh-faced stylista, KC Concepcion seems to be on a conquering roll. Here, she gives us a peek into her life and style—from A to Z.

A-ccessories

KC is a chameleon when it comes to styling. Her accessories play a big role in diversifying her look as a girly—from punk-rock princess to sophisticated young lady.

B-abyz

As Bayo's 'brand' ambassador, KC has been able to express different looks, from girl next-door to sultry summer temptress.

Our KC style guide: From A to Z

KC likes to pair her Converse with colorful tights.

$459-HIGH heels

C-Chucks & Chloé

KC never misses out on the latest Chuck Taylors around. Often with great Chloé shoes, which definitely top the list of her favorite things.

K-killer heels

KC owns many of them. She loves to wear the high heels—some believe it's her!

Q-quirky prints

KC is never a wallflower. She stands out by sporting quirky prints.

R-red lipstick

KC has no shyness in red lipstick, which lends her look that old Hollywood glamour.

KC'S TRAVEL must-haves: scarves, Bossa Bags and Havaianas

S-scarves

Scarves help keep KC warm, as she travels a lot. She loves printed and colorful ones. Scarves also add color and life to a modest outfit.

D-denim

"Denim is essential, especially on her trips at UN ambassador for Hunger.

WEARING the season's hottest eyewear trend sunglasses.

KC'S eyewear collection: Calvin Klein, Prada, Levis

E-eyewear

She can't live without a pair of sunnies. Sunglasses in different shades, shapes and sizes are the easiest way to give any outfit a cool feel.

F-fit

KC will like a well-fitted dress over a trendy ensemble any time.

G-grooming

Good grooming is a basic in ABC!

H-headbands

For busy girl like KC, all it takes to keep her hair from her face is a stylish headband. It's an accessory that marries function and style effortlessly.

I-investment pieces

Coco Chanel once said "Fashion fades but style is forever." KC invests in time-tested pieces. One of her favorites is the classic Chanel 2.55 bag.

J-jewelry

As the daughter of the Megastar, KC obviously knows her jewelry.

THE CLASSIC LBD

T-traveling

KC loves traveling and the opportunity it offers to broaden her horizons.

U-United Nation's World Food Program Ambassador

"You may not be exposed to the sites on TV and commercials, but KC also has a down-to-earth, no-frills style, especially when she travels to different provinces as part of her work for the World Food Program. She is usually in jeans, sneakers and a tee-our WFP T-shirt and cap.

V-vibrant colors

A young one like her grows gals wears the coolest the rest, for which she wears dresses in vibrant hues.

W-watches and the works

KC values her time, as she is a very busy woman on the go. Her watches are always stylish, elegant.

X-clashes

KC loves Prize contrast! Recently at the Bill Clinton Global Initiative, she wore a contemporary piece by Lulu Tan Gan.

Y-yoga wear

A busy girl like KC still finds time to exercise and meditate for well-being and, a balanced life. Yoga is a fave activity; she loves cool yoga wear.

Z-zippered hoodies

She has a closet full of hoodies for rainy days. Zippered hoodies are a necessity, especially with unpredictable weather like ours.

L-little black dress and large black bag

All girls must have a perfect little black dress in their closet, and a large black bag, too! These two are major wardrobe essentials for KC.

M-man's white shirt

The man's white shirt is probably the most versatile piece for both genders. It can also be a sexy outfit. KC likes to wear hers tied in front to show off her flat tummy.

N-nail polish

No matter how busy KC gets, she always makes sure she has pretty nail polish on.

O-one-piece suits and overalls

One-piece suits and overalls look great on KC. They channel the '70s retro chick in her.

P-pretty in pink

Pink is every girl's favorite color. As much as KC loves the "rock star" vibe, there are days when the girly girl in her shines through, and there's when anything pink comes in handy.

KC LOVES Bape's hoodies.

E-mail the author at shalou@inquirer.com.ph

(MAR. Sol, premiere Dompet Dhuafa Republika, Maj Reyes, president of Boeing Southeast Asia; Jong Kun, WFP National Ambassador for Korea; former US president Clinton; KC Concepcion, United Nations WFP Philippines Harvard Ambassador Against Hunger; Kate O'Shea, COO a.i. of Sales; and Anthony Banbury, WFP's regional director for Asia

KC's strongest 'accessory'

From page C1

Having been blessed with ample opportunities, KC certainly knows how to give back. Young as she is, she is already deeply involved in humanitarian causes. She's not only an accomplished actress serious about her craft, but takes caring person who aims to improve the welfare of others.

Indeed it's her sense of values that makes for the perfect "accessory" that money can't buy.

AT 4AM AFTER the fight, Pacquiao made the homme of Las Vegas Review-Journal(on all the pens: "Pacquiao over whelms De La Hoya in 8th round"

WPE Jokes wanders the fight on TV in the couple's suite at The Mandalay

THE HERO long with cute messages

Pacquaio, private time

white jacket with her name inscribed on it.

After the bridal fight, the romance from one spent the new hours with friends and his scantily-clad wife on TV. Always, after a fight, Pacquiao is not allowed to sleep until early morning, so the doctor, or close members, at least on match and another time for signs of a brain injury, particularly brain hemorrhage.

As for Dr. Jo Hora, he has now been designated a living exhibition("Silver Boy" as the new Golden Boy a exhibiting his victory over his erstwhile idol. And what damage the Mexican boxer could not inflict on the PH quite champ, the fans surely did as they mobbed him during the victory party in Stars Angels at Mandalay, in Vegas. In the result, Pacquiao was pushed to a third post, swelling to noble heights.

As his close associate told Inquirer: "You can say he suffered the injury—after the fight. His ankle remains swollen."

Pacquiao would return to the States with his kids to join the eight month pregnant

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This Holiday Season, Zunic shows you how to eat, drink and be merry while looking trim and fit!

If you enjoy an active social life, you can already begin to imagine the number of parties you'll be going to this Holiday Season. For many of us, the process may actually have started several weeks ago.

An endless parade of food and drink can only mean extra calories — most of them destined to add inches where those inches look the worst.

That's where Zunic's exclusive Slimming and Body Sculpting Method™ can help — to keep you looking fit and trim, in spite of the excess calories that you have to cope with throughout this season.

With it, skilled and powerful ways to melt away unwanted fat and to shape your body, all of them effective, painless, and non-invasive, you can eat, drink, and party without remorse. Like our many satisfied clients, you will discover how Zunic's established technology works where diet and exercise fail, and unlike painful surgery, pills and injections are not an option.

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That's why Zunic is the preferred choice of busy executives, full-time moms, frequent travelers, equestrians, and people whose medical conditions prevent them from exercising, undergoing surgery, or taking appetite suppressants!

Talk to a Zunic consultant about how you can keep looking fit and trim in spite of the season's heightened calorie intake. Consultations are free, and are held in strict confidence.

All four Zunic centers are open Monday to Sunday, 9 am to 9pm.

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THE COUPLE...on screen right after his victory

From page C1

Before the Christmas in their new home in Hollywood. Asked what he would like to name his forthcoming daughter, he answered straightaway: "Queen Elizabeth." (He's right, naman). He already has a Princess.)

On these pages are his private moments before and after the fight, taken by Eric Pineda.

JINGLE accepts her own jacket—with her name on it—from Mike after the weigh-in at MGM.

New accessories branch

KENNETH COLE REACTION HAS opened its newest store at Robinson's Place Midtown Wing in Ermita, Manila.

Kenneth Cole Reaction is 60 sq. m of warm and cozy interiors, with displays of accessories for men and women: shoes, bags, fandanos canes and small leather goods.

Reaction also has elegant jewelry such as watches. It also offers socks for men and leather maintenance products such as cleaners and moisturizers.

Kenneth Cole Reaction is exclusively distributed by Strates Specialties, Inc. (SSI). Aside from Robinsons Place, its shops are at the Alabang Town Center, Ayala's Makati, Shangri-La Plaza, Mall of Asia, Fashion Hyp Level and TriNoma.

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FASHION BUZZ

Why the goddess is going gladiator

POPULAR COMMERCIAL MODEL AND cover girl Ardene Hensulf launched her first shoe collection at 5, Manila in the Filipino Zone of Greenbelt 5. The multi-talented Filipina-French designer was inspired by the Greek goddess in her initial line.

"Since it was my first shoe line, I wanted to associate my name with it. My name comes from Selene meaning Goddess of the moon." I wanted all my shoes to be gladiator style, something a goddess would wear but with a modern twist," she said.

For the collection, Hensulf uses earthy tones.

"Goddess of the moon looks over the sea and earth. Therefore, I used browns, blues, whites and also black for darkness of night," she said.

Asked why she decided to venture in footwear designs, Hensulf said that she's always enjoyed describing shoes and trying on all her mother's shoes when she was young. After studying fashion design, she knew that eventually she would do shoe design one day.

"I think an outfit isn't complete without the shoes. Growing up with 'Sex and the City' and Carrie Bradshaw's shoe collection, who wouldn't get addicted," she added.

THE DESIGNER as cover girl

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Romance and goth—that's the holiday drift

How to get that dark, but feminine, look

SHADY DIVA. Cesar Vazquez menswear satin dress with black beaded choker

FLORAL ACCENT. Cotton Inc women's cream print-sleeved top, Mango black cotton shorts; Zara beaded bustier bag

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

THIS SEASON, FALL in love with fashion's dark, romantic side and don sensually gothic pieces that are feminine yet a bit on the edge. That's the way fashion is going this season.

Gone are any of mystery and intrigue set off more than a Victorian novel in three volumes. Here's how:

The elements of the Southern style: dark colors (think or purple) or deep hues (scarlet and burgundy); floral accents; lace; embellishments like bead-work and feathers; bibles with sheers; ruffles.

Know-how to satisfy. Take inspiration from runway looks but always temper your own style. Do this by dressing expensive—a statement top with floral appliqués will look streamlined with a pair of shorts or skinny trousers. A bandeau skirt embellished with pretty crochet will look more modern when matched with a fitted blazer.

Accessorize. Don't want to wear the look from head to foot? Simply use accessories to create a dark romantic feel. Vintage-y beaded bustier bags, or ruffled yet modern-looking leather bags should do the trick. Slick, metallic high-heeled sandals can also add romantic flair.

Set the tone. Hair and make-up always help create a specific look. In that vein, go for dark, smoky eyes and nude lips. A runner reverses round for bold, saturated eyes with lighter eye shadow instead of black.

Risk can be worn in a couple of ways: a cut-out slip-dress and pin-straight.

E-mail the author at [redacted]

ROSETTES. Topshop black satin blazer; Lane white sweater; dark Aldo accessories; silver lace gray scarf; Mango purple pencil belt; Mike West gray suede peep-toe ankle booties

LACE. Jun Escario black-and-white lace dress; Proenza black leather belt; Mike West stapled suede heels

RUFFLES AND METALLICS. Proenza suede bag; Steve Madden pewter gladiator heels

runway inspirations runway inspirations runway inspirations runway inspirations runway inspirations

ALBERTA Ferreti, Proenza; FENDI, Ruffles; VERSACE, Shape and structure; THREEASFOUR, Black; AQUASCUTUM, Pseudo-corset; HAMISH Khan, Beadwork; ALBERTA Ferreti, Volume

Lessons from a botched job

After four(!) breast augmentations, Avi Siwa finally gets the body (and success) she wants

By Jen Rojas
Contributor

SHE APPEARED ON THE cover of FHM, and wore nothing but leaves and a sign saying "Back to Eden. Close All Zoos" when she posed for a campaign for the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Who would have thought that Avi Siwa, the sultry sirenwas built like a Barbie Doll, could have issues with her body?

"I was flat. I was really flat," says the 5'5, 107 lb Siwa as a bratty teen, talking about her figure. A breast augmentation would take care of that, though, in the case of the model, it took...gasp!...four surgeries to actually get it right.

Now 28, Siwa had her first augmentation right years ago in a mall clinic.

"At the time it looked okay," says Siwa, who was further convinced when she saw pictures of the surgeon's celebrity clientele. The operation went smoothly, but the aftermath did not. "It was dark, not well kept," she says. "But I was there and I had already paid."

Even so, she didn't have a rebuffed customer. Unable to get the breast size she desired ("Because my doctor said they were too big for our proportion"), she later found out that the silicone implants were placed above her breast muscle, resulting in a hard and unnatural look.

Promptly Siwa returned to the same clinic a year later to get that another augmentation. Like her first surgery, the second was not to her liking: It was still not big enough for her, and again, the implant was placed above her breast muscle.

Siwa then turned to a European doctor for her third augmentation in 2004.

His clinic was nice and clean, but like her earlier surgeries, she felt disappointed with the size and appearance of her breasts. "Hard and fake," she says. "And this guy has mommy issues to boot."

Others would have thrown in the towel, but not Siwa, whose fourth breast augmentation happened in January 2008, after she chanced upon one of the doctors of multi-specialty aesthetic institute Beverly Hills 8750 (6 Ayala Avenue, Makati).

"I really saw the difference," says Siwa who was impressed with the medical team's professionalism and approach.

The augmentation was performed by Rene C. Valerio, a seasoned plastic surgeon and member of a number of medical associations, among them the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, Philippine Board of Plastic Surgeons, Philippine Association of Plastic Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons, and Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery of which he is the only Philippine-based Filipino plastic surgeon enrolled.

Dr. Christine Amores, an associate plastic surgeon and first assist to Dr. Valerio, says Siwa underwent a Revision Surgery for Severe Breast Contracture (severe breast tissue surrounded to significant scarring of the capsule), after removing her third implants and the thick capsules that contained the implant, Valerio and his team placed US FDA-approved silicone gel-filled implants below Siwa's breast muscles to eliminate the chance of a too-firm look.

Siwa says doctors had an shorter hair in their Siwa where her previous surgeries showed her—under her breasts—but mark the proper surgical technique," she says. "Hopefully we prevent the development of unfavorable scarring."

Siwa admitted to doing "a little sound" on her fourth surgery. "But vanity can be through," she says with a laugh.

From the look of things, surgery no. 4 is a success in economic terms. For one, the Bentley got the ride she wants: a S65.

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DR. RENE C. Valerio and Siwa

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WHO CAN JOIN AND WHAT ARE THE CATEGORIES?

All Mabisang customers who want to join and give back to less privileged children are invited to participate. Following are the categories for this year's campaign:

House category #1: Village subdivision houses (3 winners)
House category #2: Real village, low-cost/socialized housing (3 winners)
Business: Christmas Churches that celebrate Christmas (1 winner)

HOW DO YOU JOIN?

It can simple. Just call the Mabisang ang Pasko Hotline at (02) 886-7000 for Metro Manila or 1-800-10MAP (hope) (1-800-10627 4673) for provincial areas to get your name and contact details and tell a creative story why house or church will be visited by Mabisang ang Pasko representatives for them to take a photo of your entry. Then wait for the appointed schedule and for Mabisang ang Pasko team will be there to take your photo and take a photo in your lighted home or church.

For full details, and to download the entry form in advance, please visit our website: www.mabisangangpasko.com

WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA FOR JUDGING?

Following are the criteria for judging the brightest and most decorated houses and churches:

Brightness: 40% (overall illumination and quality of design)
Creativity: 40% (theme or design)
Resourcefulness: 20% (best use of indigenous or recycled materials)

WHAT WILL YOU WIN?

Three (3) grand winners in the category will win Php 25,000 tax free each. House winners will get to choose a package (materials assistance for repairs or minor renovations will cover Php 25,000 tax free.

WHEN IS THE CAMPAIGN PERIOD?

Nominations period starts on November 3 and ends December 31, 2008. But don't wait 'til it's too late to join and let your voice in spreading hope.

HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF YOUR ENTRY QUALIFIES?

A Mabisang ang Pasko committee composed of Mabisang executives and select VIPs will screen the entries. Entries that make it to the final judging shortlist will be posted on the Mabisang ang Pasko website as well as various Mabisang offices.

HOW WILL YOU KNOW IF YOUR ENTRY WON?

You will be notified through phone call, registered mail, website, and major newspaper announcements after the contest. Final judging of entries will be on the first week of January 2009, with acceptance by the Mabisang ang Pasko awarding event each last night after.

METO Snowskid wears Legendary Eagle.

JANE Valencia and mom Tina Bordia wear Lady Pandas.

CHROMA Lux

MR. PUNK

GLAMOUR wears Pyrus Sunrise.

GOLDFINGER

TESSA Prima Pablo wears Abstract while Russell Domingo wears Flying Freemasary.

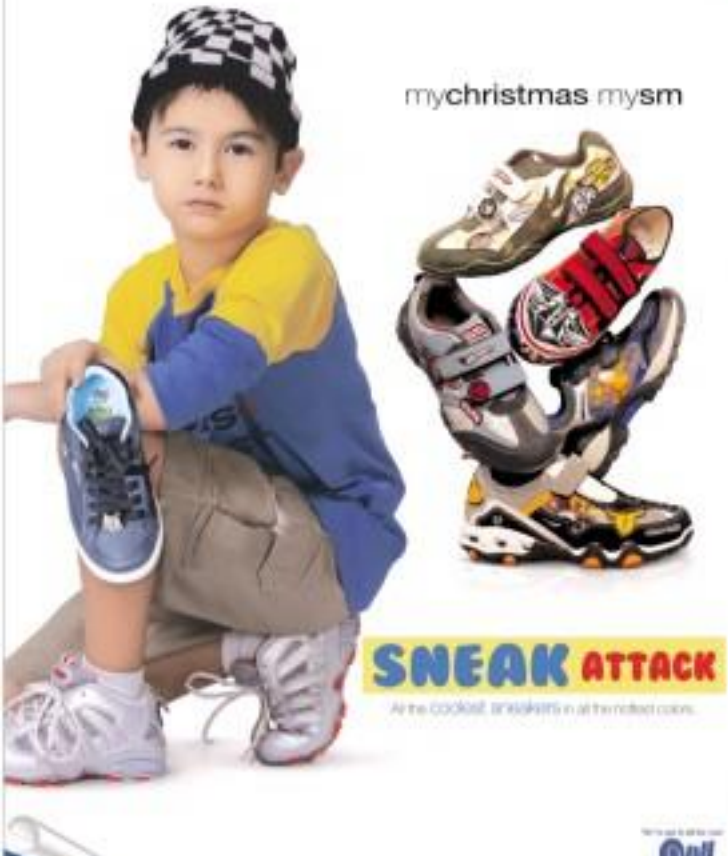
Who wore which Swatch?

AT THE SWATCH @ 25: COOL AS ICE PARTY recently held at the Gallery of Greenbelt 5, a mix of interesting personalities wore their favorite Swatch watches.

The new Swatch store is at Greenbelt 5, Glorietta 4, Trinoma, SM Megamall and all Swatch kiosks.

DEREK Ramsay shows Mr. Punk.

HOLIDAY divas



Bouncing . . .

Point page B1

Secondly, she doesn't feel the need to either overindulge enhancements. "That will be my last," she says of her breast augmentation.

More importantly, being enlisted at last week her to share allows her to focus on other things—her career, for instance. She will launch a clothing line in January. She is in charge of the eighteen Club Asteroid's public relations.

"I feel really blessed. Everything's happening for me now. The challenge is to keep up, and to work harder."

Right from the start

THOUGH [illegible] HUGO 67909 patients are at all recently first-timers seeking aesthetic enhancement, the last two years have seen a spike in the number of clients looking for "re-dos" of surgeries that were either botched by their original doctors or below a patient's satisfaction.

Dr. Jennifer Martinhagen, medical director of Beverly Hills 07501 and a cosmetic gynecologist, suggests ways to avoid an unnecessary second (or in the case of him, third and fourth) surgery:

1. **Research on the procedure you're about to undergo.** Don't just go online or read books, talk to people who have had the same surgery and doctors who have performed it. Educating yourself leaves little chance for surprises or disappointment.

2. **Know your doctor.** Check on his medical background, how much experience he has, and find out which societies he/she belongs to. A cosmetic surgeon may be just as skilled as a plastic surgeon, but according to Dr. Martinhagen, the former has less training than the board-certified latter. And as aesthetician, he adds, could be anyone, from a hair stylist to a makeup artist, so do not entrust your body and life to just anyone.

3. **Inquire about the operating room in.** If surgery is to take place in a non-hospital-based operating room, find out how hygienic the place is, and if the clinic has been accredited by the Department of Health's and has a business permit.

Also, Dr. Martinhagen cautions booking patients with pre-existing conditions such as heart disease, diabetes or hypertension in a hospital, where there are ethnicians and equipment available in case of emergency.

4. **Have realistic expectations.** Accept the fact that no matter how much surgery you don't appreciate for an Asian face, or that you'll have to exercise and watch what you eat even after liposuction. Plastic and cosmetic surgery is there to enhance your appearance, not turn you into someone you are not.

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The look of luxe

JUST IN TIME FOR the holidays, SM has brought in exciting international labels for modern, stylish women.

Chic and sophisticated dresses from Mint and Cleo and BON-Generation express the look of luxe, making you stand out as you navigate the holiday party circuit.

Mint and Cleo belongs to Mint Avanti's portfolio of 15 brands, and is a line from the house of BCBG, which stands for the French phrase "bon chic, bon genre."

Known for clothes with a bonsai flair, Mint and Cleo's collection includes stylish dresses with feminine details like cinched waists, shoulder-baring cuts, ruching, lace and unusual embellishments like delicate beads and sequins.

BON-Generation, another Mint Avanti creation, has ten-ants items that can go casual or dressy.

Every ensemble oozes new standard of holiday elegance with

THE LOOK 51

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Picks of the week

Jewelry: Epikosmos by Tweetie

ICE CRYSTALS BURST INTO the retail scene in 2003 when jewelry designer Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez launched a collection of jewelry charm bracelets and chokers with colorful semiprecious stones and Swarovski crystals. Stylish folks snapped up her eye-catching pieces, and they have since always looked forward to the latest offerings from this creative soul who's most known for her use of color and organic materials.

Some of her bestsellers include a collection that features hornspray wood and semiprecious stones, and up-to-the-minute acrylic pieces (cuffs, earrings and rings). And now, Gonzalez is once again introducing new elements into her already exciting line of products: the Epikosmos line by T&G.

Epikosmos, with its universal, epicene appeal, was conceived for daring, self-assured individuals who want to be fashionably unique and empowered. It is a modern line of accessories, which extends its other personal pieces such as credit card and document holders.

"This line is a departure from my ultra feminine, flirty-casual and some jewelry line it out in any very subdued," says Gonzalez.

The square rings and bangles are classy, polished lines perfectly highlighting the contrast between the shoes of stainless steel and the vibrant hues of resin shown. Leathers on the other hand, are used to complement the bold sophistication of solid stainless to bring a relaxed and easy feel to the collection.

Check out Epikosmos by T&G at Ice Crystals in Eastwood, Boston's Makati, Tower and Alabang.

EPIKOSMOS line by T&G

STAINLESS-STEEL square ring with colored resin shown

STAINLESS links with toggle lock

SQUARE bangle of stainless steel and resin. Also available in green, aqua, brown and black

LEATHER bracelet with stainless link set

WOW! T9 song chip, perfect for the Christmas celebrations

THE CHRISTMAS season spice up your family reunions, get together with friends with the music devilled WOW! T9 song chip. WOW! T9 contains 300 licensed songs featuring 200 English, 80 OPM, and 20 Christian songs.

Here's you will find OPM songs popularized by such artists like, Toni Gonzaga, Aiza Seguerra, Eheemeeats, Ronie Liang, Jed Feo P. Cuenca, 6 Cyclemind, Ayka, Gary Valenciano, Christian Bautista, Rachel Alejandro, Jimmy Bondoc, Celebrity, Maricris Garcia, Regine Velasquez, Bayani Agbayani, Jay Ibañez, and KHT.

Some of the top OPM hits included in T9's line-up are Cutterbox I'm Fallin', Dreaming, Dell'ma, Pinkfloyd, Ang Cute Ng Ina Mo, Hajji, Kapitbahay Ko, Chinitorian, Mara Lang Basta, Sin Kanya, Sandalan, Sorry, Stay, Time In, Tinderman Ni Aling Nena, I Will Be There, If The Feeling Is Gone, Ikaw Lamang, Kailan Pa, merry Ikaw, Walang Pa Rin, Lol Mo Ba Wa One, Magbalik, Kaibigan Pala, Money Man, Mangat Din, Maling Akala, Maraming Salungatan, May Time Pa Ako Libre.

Yourself surely be singing till the wee hours of the morning with its power mixes of English songs (sounds too) on all the time-up of British Spears, Corbin Cabbat, Mariah Carey, Pussycat Dolls, Akon, Bonnie Bailey, Journey, Shaggy, Chris Daughtry, Jason, The Cranberries, Ivy Sym, Avril Lavigne, Rihanna, Usher, Maroon 5, 5 Cent 7, Jojo, Linkin Park, Sarah, The Calling, Robbie Williams, Westlife, Mariana, and Justin Timberlake.

Sing to such monster hits like: Yes Dear, Mr Crazy, Sunny, Butterfly, Can't Take That Away (Time Mix), Don't Cha, Don't Matter, Everytime, Faithfully, Hey Baby Lets, Home, Incomplete, Irresistible, I'll Never Break Your Heart, It's Gonna Be Me, Keep Holding On, Low, Lucky, Make It Easy On Me, Makes Me Wonder, Never Had a Dream Come True, No One Else Comes Close, Numb, Officially Missing You, Oops!...I Did It Again, Out Lives, Rock DJ, Rock Your Body, Say My Name, She Will Be Loved, Teenagers, The Tide Is High (Get That Feeling), This Love, Unbreak, Unbreakable, Unfaithful, Wake Up Call, What Goes Around Comes Around, When You Gone.

Love for music deflows our Filipino culture create your priceless bonding moments into cherished memories. Expand your WOW! song library with the latest WOW! T9 song CHIP. WOW! T9 is exclusively distributed by M-A-Jeff's Enterprises / GDX Corporation, and available at all leading music and appliance stores nationwide. For more information log on to www.mxgomic.com.

Shoes: Gaupo Shoe Couture

KATARINA. Open-toe platforms with ankle straps in marrone suede, aqua blue patent leather and brown suede leather

STEPHENIE. Open-toe sandals in gray suede leather embellished with Swarovski crystals

SARAH. Pump-toe platform sling-back with bow detail in fuchsia suede leather

BEATRICE. Peep-toe platforms with ankle cuffs in electric blue and neon green suede

TOP FASHION DESIGNER and former Shanghai Tang creative director Cesar Gaupo presents his latest shoe collection under his eponymous brand.

This season, Gaupo's statement is all about luxury and high fashion. He makes use of materials like Italian suede, metallic kid leather, and embellishments such as Swarovski crystals. He also makes use of rich and bold fall colors like mustard, brown and purple.

First established in December 2006, Gaupo Shoe Couture is now in the US, Japan (one in Ginza) and S.

The latest collection is also available in a newly opened department store in Causeway Bay, Hong Kong.

Timepiece with precious stones

DIAMOND Cruise Chrono in candy colors

TEN YEARS AGO, TECHNOMarine started mixing diamonds and plastic. This almost blasphemous combination gave birth to TechnoDiamond.

With over 150,000 models sold, the first diving chronograph which brings together a bezel encrusted with precious stones and an interchangeable plastic strap became popular.

To a rather conservative industry, the brand manages to show a new way where precise curves and elegance come together to create an undeniable concept.

Today, TechnoMarine has revisited this symbolic model and has created Diamond Cruise Chrono.

The bezel is studded with 116 full size white diamonds, mother-of-pearl dial, plastic strap with screw keys in place with no screws and oblong-shaped push-buttons framing the sliding crown.

The Diamond Cruise Chrono has definitely made its statement.

Picks of the week

From page E2

Exhibit: Mabuhay Modelong Pinoy!

FRESH Kacie Ariel Ong and Nicholle Bautista

CELEBRATING ITS 21ST YEAR in the Philippine fashion industry, the Professional Models Association of the Philippines (PMAP), launches a 30-piece photo exhibit that aims to promote a social awareness campaign entitled "Mabuhay Modelong Pinoy!"

Made possible by Samsung, the exhibit endeavors to uplift the image of true Philippine beauty in our society, as colonial mentality is growing more rampant and evident in our current market.

Straight to life through the visionary eye of veteran fashion photographer Raymond Isaac, who was assisted by up-and-coming photographer Aga Coronado of Portfolio Studio, the exhibit showcases our Philippine heritage and culture, inspired by local folklore, popular images, and pop culture.

The exhibit also features PMAP's new faces like Nick Ong, Natasha Bautista, Frederick Maga, Derick Robadilla and Rahael De Silva, alongside the new board of PMAP officers, led by president Ariel Arandilla.

"This is our battle cry—not merely to protect livelihood, but also to instill a sense of pride for our color, culture and country. We should not succumb to people's minds that there is strength and true loveability in Philippine beauty," says Arandilla.

The exhibit runs until Dec. 14 at Greenbelt 3, Makati. It is supported by Ayala Land Corp., SP property, Mandaluyo, Pacsumo and Ralph's Wine. Visit www.pmap.net.ph.

PMAP president Ariel Arandilla and board members Peter Hermida and Raphael Kiefer with the Samsung Pixon phone

PHOTOS BY

LEE: MAKE HISTORY IN FOCUS

Lee Jeans continues its involvement with the art of photography with an impromptu fashion shoot with street savvy photographer Steve Tirona. In line with the brand's campaign of "Making History" with photo stories, Lee took the concept to another level by documenting their major event through an actual fashion shoot. With the Lee Rocks Manila concert as the playground, models mingled with the crowd, partied with the bands and posed like there was no tomorrow, perfectly setting off the mood for Lee's Spring Summer 2009 collection. With a mix of core denim pieces and the new premium Gold Label collection, the girls rocked edgy low-front sexy tanks paired with fishtruck red jeans, and the new distressed, drop crotch boot and narrow denim silhouettes. The boys were all about the brands wellhue rebellion with plaids and denim waistcoats paired with folded Bermudas, treated denim and rocker fit slim jeans.

Lee is still looking for the best photo stories! Entries from all around the Asia Pacific region are being judged by the Da Mimi foundation in Modena Italy. VF Asia and Europe Jeanswear Marketing directors and uploaded already at **www.makehistory-ap.com**. With the Philippines leading as the country with the most entries, India next and Australia third, the global world of Make History is expanding. Share your point of view, portray your sentiments, and make it real, personal and honest. You never know, that US$40,000 prize money just might have your name on it. So no, what are you waiting for. Be a part of something and go make history.

Lee Spring Summer Collection available Summer 2009
Lee Gold Label only available at Treasures, Bonifacio High Street

KATIE
Steve Tirona, Makati

TERMINAL COUPLE
Jo Ann Bilgard, Angeles

LINDSEY
Steve Tirona, Makati

DOODLE, BEER AND PEACE!
Kai Kuang, San Juan

The look of luxe

SATIN-laced halter dress with bold lines from Mac and Cheo

From page B1

clothes from Mac and Cheo and BCBGeneration, which are available at the Ladies' Shoe Boutique Department of SM Makati, SM Megamall and the SM Malls of Asia.

Flirty V-laced ruffle mini bustier dress from Mac and Cheo

MATTE jersey halter pleated dress from Mac and Cheo

PLEATED cocktail wrap knit dress from BCBGeneration

FASHION MEETS MUSIC THIS SEASON AT THE PODIUM

Gather the family and celebrate the holiday season in style at The Podium. Indulge in a month of thrilling shopping choices, exciting performances, and great music. After all, you deserve to relish all the joy and pleasure that the holidays can bring.

Catch these exciting shows at The Atrium:

World Class Performers:

Matt Monro Jnr. • December 12 • 5 pm
Britain's Got Talent - Charlie Green • December 20 • 4 pm

Homegrown Talents:

Richard Poon • December 13 • 6 pm
Christmas with Julianne • December 13 • 6 pm
Akademas Concert • December 17 • 4 pm
Rico Blanco Ballads • December 20 • 5 pm

Christmas Shows and Choirs:

New Manners Christmas • December 13 • 5 pm
Wind & Earth Korea Cultural Show • December 14 • 2 pm
UP Singing Ambassadors • December 14 • 4 pm
UP Vocal Ensemble • December 20 • 6 pm
A Jazzy Christmas • December 22 • 5 pm
The Nutcracker Story • December 23 • 6 pm
Sisters of Mary Christie • December 26 • 4 pm
Mandaluyong Children's Choir • December 27 • 6 pm
Weekend with Santa Claus • December 7, 14 & 21

Delight in these holiday performances at Piazza Musica:

World Class Performers:

Apollosonic Orchestra • December 24 • 8 pm

Homegrown Talents:

Up Dharma Down • December 13 • 7 pm
Nico Maco and Playground • December 26 • 7 pm

LIFESTYLE Fashion Beauty

Contributing Editors
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani, Jessi Bypasson and Ria Francisco Prieto

Aussie-Filipino designer launches line

LEONARDO Solitus Spring/Summer 2008 collection

LEONARDO Solitus

LEADING AUSTRALIAN-Filipino fashion designer Leonardo Solitus launches his eponymous label, LEONARDO SOLITUS with an unwaveringly sensual 2008 Spring and Summer Collection.

READ FULL STORY F2

Cartimar and Cash & Carry, old shopping haunts rediscovered

You can never go wrong with these indestructible shopping places

By John Ramirez
Contributor

MENTION CARTIMAR AND CASH & Carry and IRAMA, Subigo, Spicy Suprême, Dragonfly and Taewon sneakers to us and as Cuneta Mata expadaliber come into mind. This Christmas, bring out the Gil in you by rediscovering these two shopping destinations if you are looking for a place to shop minus the crowds.

Cartimar Shopping Centre is still there after almost four decades. For those who used to frequent this place, Cartimar has retained its charm. The shops are still there, selling mostly imported rubber shoes and other items. There are also cheap imported shoes from China.

CARTIMAR F3

THE GOOD Pool alley rooms as star stand level

Aussie-Filipino designer launches line

THE DESIGNER'S work featured in The (Sydney) Magazine

From page F1

The Pampanga native worked as a design consultant for Rivel Swanepoel in the late '90s before moving to Australia. There he launched his design career after graduating with distinction from Sydney's renowned Whitehouse Institute of Design in 1999.

Leonardo Sulleza S/S 2008 is the culmination of this designer's singular design vision, blending classic tailoring with avant-garde sensibilities. Its ever-fierce female heads meets '60s mod silhouettes in an enticing fusion of metallics and satins in geometric grey, black and cream punctuated by shots of silver, copper and platinum gold.

Recently, to Manila to launch his line, Sulleza says, "My lasting past, present and future, those pieces can be achingly De Sulleza and evenly muted. These become timeless, linked to our desire for an impossible future and an irrevocable bygone-era." LEONARDO SULLEZA S/S 2008 is available at www.ila-ilas.com

FUSION of metallics and satins

SCIENCE FICTION Femme fatale meets '60s mod silhouettes

PERFORMED by Tungawi Theater Group, Christmas Sea Adventure is the heartwarming story of Body, the Penguin, Annie the Mermaid, Bruno, the Clown Fish, Lony, the Young Shark, and Sharla, the Mother Shark

KIDS will love the colorful and unique costumes of the undersea water cast of Christmas Sea Adventure Musical Play

Mermaids and sea creatures celebrate the Christmas Sea Adventure (comments Dec. 14 at 6:00 PM at the Music Hall of the SM Mall of Asia.

Under The Sea Christmas Adventures

Performed by the Tungawi Theater Group, Christmas Sea Adventure is the heartwarming story of Body, the Penguin, Annie the Mermaid, Bruno, the Clown Fish, Lony, the Young Shark, and Sharla, the Mother Shark.

Under the sea of Atlantica, everyone is in a festive mood in anticipation of the upcoming Christmas-sea celebration. Sea creatures sing and dance while doing their respective sea activities and sea chores. This happy gathering is cut short by a terrifying attack of fearsome and troublesome sharks. Everybody scampers away and hides in the safety of their individual nooks. The peace of Atlantica is threatened by the long standing enemy between the sharks and sea creatures.

This play will take the audience underwater with colorful costumes and sea scenery. Exciting song and dance production numbers will set the fun and festive mood - Under the Sea, Part of the World, Out There, Gotta Go My Way, Somebody to Love Me, Fabulous, All for One, and Boogie Wonderland.

Enjoy a Christmas-Sea Adventure tomorrow, December 14 at 6:00 PM at the Music Hall of the SM Mall of Asia.

THE CAST of the Christmas Sea Adventures Musical Play will be on a very colorful sea creatures costumes and headdresses on a sea scenery set up

ARIEL, the Mermaid at Christmas Sea Adventures

Cartimar and Cash & Carry . . .

From page F1

However, some stalls are selling the real McCoy. When I was scouting for a certain shoe brand, we made sure that Cartimar dealers got invited to pre-ordering sessions just to get their bulk orders.

What used to be a community shopping complex catering mainly to affluent dwellers of Dasmariñas, Urdaneta, Bonifacio, Park Avenue, and Tell has morphed into a one-stop...a-bundle-here destination, an noisy bivouac, an obnoxious sidewalk vendors, only peace and quiet...except for the barking of dogs and the chirping of birds from the nearby pet shops. Cartimar was the source of PX goods and imported brands not readily available then such as Lacoste and Ralph Lauren.

Trivia: This part of Pasay used to be the enclave of old, rich families such as the Lopezes and Cojuangcos. Palatial mansions and summer houses dotted the old Dewey Boulevard (Roxas Boulevard) all the way to Dominga to Vito Cruz. Ninoy and Cory Aquino got married at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish along Harrison Street.

Cartimar Pet Market is still in business even if Ben Higgins Pasay Public Market is giving it stiff competition. Rowena and Augustus grocers stores have operated to serve the expats and locals who love cooking dishes from these countries.

Cartimar's artisans synonymous these days are the pet shops and bike stores. For pet lovers, dogs of all breeds and strays as well as cats, freshwater and tropical aquarium fish, and even reptiles are for sale. Supplies, from pet foods, accessories and veterinary services are available from stores and cages of pet shops.

The Cartimar Garden Center has shrunk in size through the years. Today it occupies a small space; it used to be an entire building. It sells orchids, garden plants such as palms and ornamental potted plants...and garden supplies.

CARTIMAR, F4

AMERICAN Eagle Outfitter hoodies, 3 for P900

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Come to a dazzling celebration, a fabulous feast of the senses, surround yourself with holiday cheer with a sparkling Sofitel Holiday.

Glitzy and modern decors will adorn the lobby area, plenty of chocolate goodies are available at the ginger bread house and Christmas serenade at the lobby.

Special Christmas activities:
December 7, **ChocoAlley Fantasy**
Enjoy unlimited chocolate eats and treats in main dishes and desserts.
December 14, **Rudolf's Gifts**
Satisfy your craving with delightful candies, cookies and yummy confectionery
December 21, **Santa's Factory**
Feast your palate on boundless pleasures of Christmas dishes from all corners of the world
December 24 and 25, **Christmas Feast**
Revel in the best and largest buffet selection in town

Sunset Bar presents **Afterglow** - a sundown chill out lounging by the bay all Fridays and Saturdays.

7 Pecados presents **Groovy Nights** - music of 80's, 90's and present. Enjoy 50% discount on standard drinks between 8.00PM to 9:00PM.

Happy Holidays to all!

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Cartimar and Cash & Carry, old shopping . . .

From page F1

Cash & Carry

The old building that used to house the malls has been dismantled to give way to a new Cash & Carry. As they say, bigger is better, and this applies to the new mall resource.

Cash & Carry, the shopping destination before the advent of many such malls, is now a single four-story affair. On the first floor was likely the iconic Mabel's neighborhood supermarket and retail giants and food chains—Mahlmed Book Store, JolliBee, Red Ribbon, Yellow Cab Pizza, Mercedes, Mercury Drug, Bench and Folded & Hung—and small stores selling mostly export rejects items.

Also on the ground floor is one of my favorite shopping pit stops, Japan Home Center, which is unashamed in stuffs in the metric. Here, one finds Japanese products—from school supplies to kitchen and home paraphernalia. I make sure I buy a set of wooden hangers, a steal at P35 for three pieces and I just can't get enough of them. These hangers look so good in my closet, instead of the black plastic ones.

POSSIBLE gift-shop craving at P35

AUTHOR'S good find in Cartimar, tip: buy's hanger brand Hand Rose

On the accessories level is Adidas Depot and a couple of international shoe brands. Also, the PX shops of the old Cash & Carry have relocated to this level. One can find DVD, Feast of The Lions and imported Hanes branded undershirts, with scents and other imported beauty products.

On the third level, two new store-of-the-art cinemas have been added. Shops such as Abenson, ACE Hardware, nail shops for electronics and mobile phones, and the mall's food court are also in this level.

Recently, Cash & Carry opened a Garage-type bazaar area aptly called The Good Find. Think Greenhills without the crowd, this is the feeling one gets when shopping in this bazaar. I was lucky to find Americana Eagle Outfitter hoodies selling for P500/3 pieces in one of the stalls.

Times may have changed, but you can't teach old dog new tricks. Cartimar and Cash & Carry are two shopping destinations that remain hot, even if the '90s skinny jeans have come and gone, and come again, in fashion. Whatever the reason, Cartimar and Cash & Carry are worth visiting and revisiting.

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3. Liquid Foundation Reg.: P985 NOW: P788
1. Double Eye Lift Reg.: P780 NOW: P468
2. Day Cream + Pump Reg.: P675 NOW: P540
1. Gentle Day Cream SPF20 Reg.: P543 NOW: P434
2. Double Eye Zone Brightener Reg.: P675 NOW: P540
Long-lasting Lip Gloss Reg.: P545 NOW: P518
Moisturizing Lipstick Reg.: P520 NOW: P416
Beauty Tubes Mascara Reg.: P545 NOW: P518
1. Shampoo 250ml Reg.: P366 NOW: P146
2. Nutri-Gloss Shampoo 250ml Reg.: P585 NOW: P148
3. Conditioner 200ml Reg.: P570 NOW: P457
4. Serum Reg.: P545 NOW: P363
5. Mask Reg.: P515 NOW: P257
Studio Reg.: P540 NOW: P432
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Colorant Reg.: P545 NOW: P436
Creme Gloss Reg.: P480 NOW: P440

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LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

Shakey's 11-11-11 If it's late, it's FREE

Tips from international makeup maven Missy

'Wearing red lipstick doesn't mean your lips have to walk ahead of the rest of you'

BLESSING to Ms Chesca Carpo-Dionisio, makeup by Missy Moran

IT'S CHRISTMAS, AND WITH EVERYONE having parties to go to, I'm sure eye bags and dark circles are appearing everywhere.

I interviewed international beauty maven Missy Moran to help us girls know how to look good this season.

Knockout!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

Name: Missy Moran

Website: www.missy-moran.com

Contact number in Manila: +63 09053037705

What's your background, and what are you working on now?

I started over 15 years ago in the San Francisco Bay Area. While in art school, a good friend recommended that I audition for a job with MAC cosmetics. Back in the '90s, I had no idea how difficult and coveted the job was, but I got the gig!

Through MAC's very intense and advanced training, I fell madly in love with makeup artistry. I was lucky enough to work side by side with some of the most seasoned, technically amazing makeup artists. My mentor, Tiffany Johnston, made sure the quality of work I was doing was not only up to par but fantastic, and for that I am eternally grateful. I quickly moved up with the company moved east and became part of the artist training and development team.

After a little over a year in artist training, I decided to freelance. I quickly tapped into the Houston bridal scene, working as a bona fide bridal artist, doing theatrical, editorial and production work. I also worked as a makeup teacher for aspiring young students at the Meyerhoff School of Modeling for a good number of years. I also created a workshop for working professionals and women of all ages who wanted to educate themselves on makeup applications and products.

In 2001, I hit the Las Vegas scene. While doing creative projects and editorials, I was hired as regional artist for the fabulous Jean Barrera Cosmetics, and moved to work at the Ritz Carlton Spa at Lake Las Vegas doing makeup for wedding groups. There I was hired as the sole resident makeup artist, lash designer and face and body waxer for the Shiseido for two years.

This summer, I received an air-brush makeup artist at Color salon at Caesar's Palace by celebrity hairstylist Michael Boychuck. Due to the enormous amount of brides and tourists, I've had the opportunity to do makeup on over a thousand faces—everyday people and celebrities alike—in the first six months in Vegas! It is truly a different world out there!

Having honed my skills all these years, my friends have convinced me to come back home and tap into the Southeast Asian scene. This not only allows me the freedom to service private clientele and accept luxe creative projects and endeavors, but also gives me a chance to tap into my roots and drink up the fun and culture that Manila has to offer.

What's the holiday makeup trend in the US?

All shades of red. Wearing red lipstick doesn't mean your lips have to walk ahead of the rest of you. There are endless shades of red lipstick and glosses in the market that can be worn without looking too strong.

What's the fastest, easiest way a girl can look made-up?

Cream eyeliners, they are massive, blush and lip gloss! Done.

Give us five makeup tips to look fresh for a long night of partying and fun.

Since Manila is an extremely humid environment, I would suggest:

1.) A small application of matching primer after cleansing, before foundation, to the key areas of shine—across the nose, on the forehead, and on the chin.

2.) If wearing foundation, go to with a light loose powder. Keep that powder or blotting film in your purse for touch-ups

get your happy.

a hint of citrus, a wealth of flowers

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CLINIQUE

Cover up imperfections

Finding the right concealer formula is key

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE A CONCEALER is no different than magically erases all blemishes. Such circular thinking is wrong.

The reality is, if present some disappointments. It bleeds throughout the rest of the face, drawing in little attention to those as possible. The target behind: are still there, but they just become less noticeable.

Kelly Misa, Bride of the Exile

Finding the right concealer formula is key. Choosing the wrong consistency and tone can result in disasters like reverse raccoon eyes, a highlighted pimple or a cakey finish.

Makeup artist to celebrities Lida Flores knows just what one order to not to pick a specific imperfections, like dusters some tips:

Three formulas

Concealers come in three different formulas...light diffusing, creme and dry cover/full matte. Each is made to cast certain skin types and criteria/flaws particular areas.

Light Diffusing Concealer. This comes in sheer and ultra-light textures, and is ideal for lifting the tired parts of the face, like the corners of the mouth, under the eyes and fine lines of the mouth. It provides light coverage and can be worn on its own, without foundation or powder.

Creme Concealer. This works well to hide scars and birthmarks and comes in a creamier, more textured. Due to the heavy consistency and tone coverage it offers great coverage while looking well on photographic and television lighting.

Dry Pencil or Stick Concealer. This acts as a spot treatment as it targets small areas like pimples and scars. It has the driest and richest pigment and because of the absence of oil it adheres to the skin longer.

How to apply

When applying concealer, the rule is to use *one shade lighter* or highlight and bring forward the tired areas of the face, and use shade darker to push back or minimize bumps.

"The best way to know which parts to conceal or highlight is to know your skin tones and shade where's dark shadows fall on your face (normally it is along the contour bone). Did the concealer setting your cheekbones, let it settle and apply more if needed," says Flores.

To hide undereye bags, the concealer must be applied on the shadow beneath the bags and not on the area itself. Applying on the eye bags will highlight the problem rather than disguise it.

Avoid a cakey finish by prepping the skin before applying concealer.

"Using a light eye cream allows the concealer to stick and prevents the area from settling," recommends Flores. Also, piling on too much concealer and powder leads to more wrinkling.

Flores suggests using the right foundation for the specific area, and applying products a little at a time.

Some palettes have additional colors like green, blue, and apricot in them.

"These color correctors are used to counter balance opposing hues, tone down a brightness the complexion and camouflage imperfections," explains Flores.

Tattoos takes out the redness out of the tattoo. Charcoal veins, redness and ruddy cheeks like rosacea colord, salves complexions like works well. Intense pale skin and apricot enhances tired skin.

But Flores reminded us, "If your concealer has the right formulation to suit your specific needs, you do not need three color correctors. Makeup artists are there because we always work with lights for TV or photography."

CHEMPO Magic Smiggle Gift Set

SEBASTIAN Intensive Gift Set

I'm a certified lipstick addict. In one of the first cosmetic purchases I can't live without. Although my make-up kit is your flooring with lip balms, lip-crimes, tints, and glosses, I still can't seem to get enough of them and am always on the lookout for something new!

As Christmas is just around the corner, I'm out almost everyday spreading the Christmas cheer or attending parties. I often like to change my look, but when living constantly on the go changing my look can be quite tricky. So, what I end up doing is I just change my lipstick. It's so effortless! I simply rinse off the previous shade I was wearing and apply new color, and viola! A new look! If I don't have the time to change my lipstick, I just make sure that everyday I'm wearing a different shade of lipstick.

Lugging around several tubes of lipstick can eat up a lot of space in my labar kit. But thanks to the Ever Bilena Silver Collection, that isn't a problem. I love its packaging! It's sleek, slim and silver! The top of the lid shows the color of the lipstick, making finding the right shade is so easy. How convenient is that? I no longer have to open and twist it up to see the color.

And it doesn't end there; the lipsticks are enriched with vitamin E and sunscreen which keeps my lips safe and protected from the harsh elements of the environment. I have 12 days of Christmas with the 12 shades to choose from. Just so perfect for wearing and matching, for all my wonds!

So despite the holiday rush I manage to look good effortlessly.

Send your emails at kris.gabriel@gmail.com

PEAR BOWL HAND CREAM GIFT SET Cute and unique lotion and apple hand lotion duo that will make hands soft and fragrances!

Affordable face and body-care products

THE FACE SHOP OFFERS ITEMS that are affordable and priced below P1,000

Pure for this is a mild drenching wash from and moisturizer duo for men.

The lotus gift set includes a gel body wash and lotion made with extracts that will hydrate and clarify the body while relaxing senses and calming the senses, while Milk Plus is composed of a mild protein-enriched shower cream and body lotion for sensitive skin.

The Real Color gift set are available in four variants: pastel, loud, neutral and dark, and mix up of three of the best-selling nail colors per variant. A top coat and enamel remover, and a sheer of nail stickers.

The Make-Up Starter Kit is inclusive of Foundation Fluid Tint for cheeks and lips, plus Jewel Effect Duo for the eyes and Finish Jelly Tube for the lips. For the Baked Make-up method, the Pink Baked Make-up consists of Baked Shimmer to Pink Runner for cheeks and eyes, coupled with Fresh Lip Balm. The Dry Make-up set has shimmering eye shadow, tattooist's eyeliner pencil, and volumizing and curling mascara. For blendable lips, use the Lip Make-up composed of a four-color lip palette plus lip plumper. The Quick Make-up set has blush and cheek brush.

Jollibee Kids Club Presents Magical Christmas at Jollitown

With Christmas just around the corner, Jollibee is all set to spread the joy and wonder of this magical season through its first ever holiday musical special for Jollibee Kids Club (JKC) members!

On December 14, 2009 at the PICC Plenary Hall, all JKC members can see Jollibee and the Jollitowns come to life through JKC's holiday musical special entitled "Magical Christmas at Jollitown". Directed by stage veteran Ando Gemora and featuring the talents of Nino Buenaventura, Manohu Leuthengco-Yulo, and young performers active in the theatre league (such as Repertory Philippines and Trumpets), "Magical Christmas in Jollitown" promises to be the grandest gift yet of Jollibee to all Jollibee Kids Club members! Showtimes are at 10 am, 1:30 pm and 5:00 pm. Special bonbbage also await all Jollibee Kids Club members who watch the shows.

This original musical revolves around traditional Christmas themes such as family, friendship, and sharing. It tells the story of a young boy named Brian who often felt neglected and colored by his very busy father (played by Buencamino). One day, he wanders off into the mysterious Jollitown and discovers a whole new world of magic, joy, fun, food, and friendship. There he meets the cool Jollitriends namely Jollibee, Hetty, Pepe, Yum and Tenny.

To get tickets to the show, all Jollibee Kids Club members just need to present their JKC Member ID cards to the cashier at selected Jollibee stores when they order a Jollibee Kids Club Christmas Meal worth Php 150. The meal automatically comes with one free ticket. The JKC Christmas Meal includes a set of 1-piece Chickenjoy with rice, Regular Yum Fries and a regular drink. Ticket is good for one person only. For more tickets, additional JKC Christmas Meals must be purchased.

Those who are not yet Jollibee Kids Club members need not fret. For a minimum purchase of Jollibee products worth Php150, they will be asked to fill up an application form from selected Jollibee outlets and pay a Php50 membership fee.

So get ready to be enchanted this Christmas. Bring your kids and let them celebrate a truly magical Christmas with the Jollitriends!

Girly gifts for teachers and for office Kris Kringle

MAKEOVER 911

Kenny Sudex

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING can literally be a pain in the neck, not to mention in the arms, shoulders and back—from carrying heavy packages for the multitude we have to give token gifts to.

The usual food, fancy soaps and scented candle items that fit the budget are bulky as well. Tearing the malls for affordable universally flattering counselors under P300 has led me to the cosmetic counters of Watson's, Rustkosmo, SM, Pix, Landmark and Metro Market Market!

During the holiday season, nothing screams instant glamour like skillful and elaborate eye makeup. Very few know how to apply eye makeup for formal occasions so women rely on super length, curling and volumizing mascaras instead.

You're lucky if your eyelashes are at least thick or long. But some divine intervention have now existed—just to help thin-as ones that point downward.

False eyelashes will take you from natural to varnished in a minute. There will be no need to add to your existing everyday makeup.

For the women, eyelashes can never be long enough. Nichido cosmetics has come up with an affordable selection that feels weightless and, depending on your taste, can look perfectly long and natural à la Marina Rivera, to outright theatrical, evoking those of Vegas showgirls with rhinestones and glitter. They feel soft to the touch as well, pretty much like natural hair.

Nichido Eyelashes "De Luxe" are very chic strands spread apart so they can be worn even on the daytime with a bare face. People would think your lashes are just naturally long, thick and curled or you have great lash-defining mascara.

EL 050 fabric with sparkle

EL 050 thick long-and-short lashes

NT "Glamour Lashes" have more strands with shorter ones intermixing with the long ones. Ladies look Latina or fashion princess think. They're perfect for brides especially during portraits to open up eyes making them look bright and twinkling.

ARTISTIC Lashes add drama.

NICHIDO eyelash curler

BEAUTIFUL Penelope Cruz loves falsies.

During the holiday season, nothing screams instant glamour like skillful and elaborate eye makeup

due to the contrast of dark lashes to the whites of your eyes.

Dance dramatic

Blue Eyelashes "Pulsate" are an even denser and more dramatic version of NT Glamour, where the alternating lashes are pretty close to each other in length like what opera singers or ballerinas wear. This is perfect for those with short, thin and sparse eyelashes who want a noticeable dramatic change. My choices are 50209 and 14509.

EL "Paramours" are the ultimate indulgence with designs ranging from peacock feathers, rhinestones, glitter, tiny silver-ball eye to satine Swarovski which make it look as if dainty snowflakes cling to your lash tips. My choices: P3900 with the tiny silver balls and 501112, the natural lashes extra eye effect.

The lash glue is solid stuff—sturdy and is good enough for at least 10 pair applications. Lashes may also be reused, but for hygiene purposes I suggest you toss them after four uses MAXIMUM.

You may also use mascara with the lashes if you wish. All those lashes look natural as they are shorter at the sides and longest at the center so they fan out.

Ernest's lashes said, in truth are all the same length as they look very artificial and still like strands of cheese.

If your office mate or teacher is just not the type to wear false eyelashes, you may give her the Eyebrow Liner duo kit with black and brown cake, mini mascara and slant-tip eyebrow brush; or the Professional eyelash curler designed especially for Asian eyes, which comes with an extra rubber.

Feel free to shuttle use other local brands such as Inez Bikini, Fashion 21 and Fanny Serrano for Bedroom 21 brands. The great quality, selection and price points will delight and surprise you, treat gift ideas for teenagers and relatives abroad. Proudly Filipino brands!

E-mail kennysudes@yahoo.com.

Tips from international makeup maven Missy

From page 19

drama-glance the evening.

3.) Pop a bright color of blush on the apple of the cheeks, and it will make you look fresh and pretty all night.

4.) Lashes! If evening mascara always wear black. Load it up from the base of the lashes and wiggle up to the ends. It's amazing how lashes can make a huge difference to the size of the eye and the holiday photos.

5.) Don't wear lips fresh. If you are dining, make sure you remove your lipstick or lip gloss thoroughly before re-applying. Fresh lips always make a face stand out and keep the face looking pristine.

What are five must-have beauty products for you?

1.) A "stem cell -enhancer." What this does is release your stem cells from cells into your bloodstream so they can go where they are needed and literally rebuild your tissue with brand new cells. Years of sun exposure, no sweet heavens, big—those cells are trapped in your own bone marrow and simply need help getting into the bloodstream. The results are amazing! Skin glows with new youthfulness, nails grow stronger and faster than ever, and eyelashes come in strong and thick, all in a matter of a few months! It's the cure in reverse. By fixing my clients from experience—not one product that would by injects so many areas of health and beauty. The easiest way to get more answers is to visit www.melbournemd.com.

2.) Bronzer powder. The bronzer can make or break the look of a face. Making sure your bronzers are well-groomed, shaped and filled-in just enough makes a world of difference.

3.) Cream blush—a light coral or soft rose tone. Not only will the face have a touch of color, it also gives the skin a nice natural glow.

4.) Lip gloss. A juicy use of gloss on the lips keeps the face fresh-looking and timeless.

5.) A pearl, solid exfoliating scrub. Buffing the dead skin cells that sit on the face keeps the skin polished, smooth and fresh.

What is the one beauty product a girl should always carry?

Lip gloss!

Is there a look for the season?

I am a huge fan of smoky eyes and nude lips. I think it looks amazing, especially for parties and social gatherings—glamorous, sexy and if properly applied, it changes the energy of how a woman carries herself.

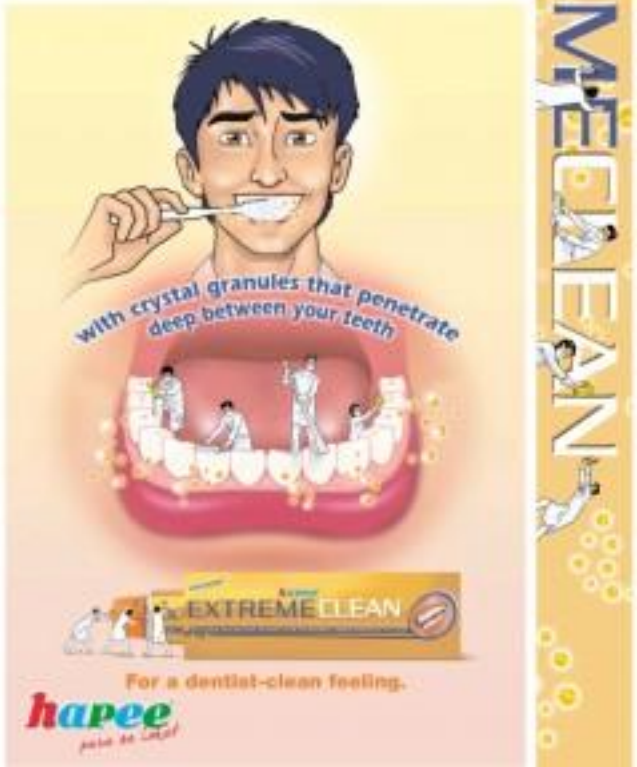
What's the biggest makeup mistake people make?

Wearing the wrong foundation color and being afraid of foundation. They go hand in hand. I believe the reason many women in Manila choose to skip foundation altogether is ...they've been matched wrong or they've been directed to a foundation doesn't suit their lifestyle.

What is the right way to prep before doing makeup?

Exfoliate the face in the morning with a mild facial cleanser. Exfoliating the face once a day if sufficient, and doing it before makeup application is better than doing it at the end of your day.

Buffing dead skin cells off the face makes the biggest difference in the application of beauty products. From moisturizer to eye primer to either a powder or a liquid foundation. The face looks fresh, polished and smooth all day.



Lipstick lessons

Don't just hoard lipstick—swipe them on your kisser

NEW YORK...IF I WERE TO name this perishable box filled with beauty trinkets, I would call it the 'this box'...as most of what's inside are pieces from Shu Uemura's previous makeup collections, thoughtfully collected during my years as a full-time beauty editor.

Whenever I feel like eyeing some serious cosmetic candy, I open this box and peruse every item, just like one would upon unearthing the contents of a time capsule.

What usually happens is, I wish and shh at its mysterious contents, since it smells abhorrent and stays for the next morning.

But last weekend...I mustered enough courage to actually break in some lipsticks and get them out of their packaging (such a pain to untangle the shiny tape!). What started as a simple experiment journaling three tubes weren't explored because a full-fledged lip color tutorial.

Muriel Chua,
Beauty in the Big Apple

Here are some usage lessons I've picked up along the way:

Never judge a lipstick by the tube. To maximize the full potential of a great lip tint, you MUST swipe it on your lips. The shade on the tube varies from the actual stage on your mouth.

Case in point: the Shu Uemura Rouge 750 initially came across as a golden plum shade (perfect for a summer party), But, upon application, it turned out to be a soft, glossy mauve that made my lips look natty, edible even-toned and full. And now it has officially migrated from the Shu Uemura to my purse.

To make the most out of shopping the way lip products, what's going for pitfalls, keep an open mind and expect pretty results.

Know your nude. Just like finding the perfect colour red wine, it pays to be on the lookout for your best royal shade. The perfect nude hue varies from person to person, as skin tone, complexion, acidity and different factors come to play (hence, the impairment of lesson #1).

If you're not a blue-based red will look just right. If your tan, or cosmetic or brown-based pigment will bring out your golden tones. Whichever the case, the wonderful thing about red magic is that it makes your teeth look whiter (my favorite reason to wear it!).

Then worry about Lipstick in Eternal Ashbur, M.A.C. Viva Glam 3 and Shu Uemura RD 130.

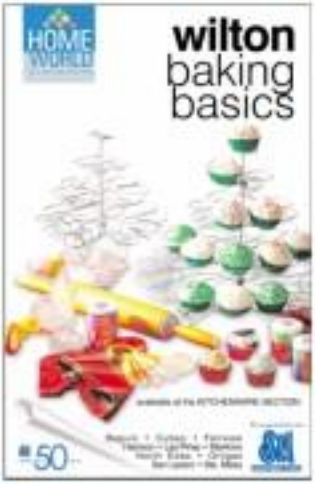
Create a great base. Lipstick only looks good if it appears

SET point-pretty with a few lipstick favorites.

seamless on your lips. If you find mini grooves and indentations on the pigments, it's time to exfoliate and moisturize. Mix a little sugar and lip balm on your palm, and scrub. Rub gently on your lips. Wipe off and rinse, then finish with a coat of think balm.

Let it sit overnight, and wake up to a pillowy, pampered pout—the best canvas for an eye-opening lipstick collection.

Muriel Chua is the former beauty editor of Cosmopolitan, Seventeen and Elle Magazine. She is now based in Mos Steel City. Visit MyMetrosexual.com.



Makeup forum

FOR MANY PEOPLE, THE wealth of movie, theater and fashion are a display of beauty and glamour, free of the limitations of time and reality.

Who doesn't dream of becoming a superstar or model and taking part in the benefits of eternal youth and perfection?

Think it, then would be the basic tradition. As assets as ever like to think they will out of look looking like that. they go through a long and arduous process to transform their selves into nothing less than flawless-looking creatures.

Isabel Rivera,
Multilingual Host

It's no surprise that every successful star makes sure to look the most heated makeup artists for their major movies and campaigns. Makeup artists play a big part in fashion, stage, film and television productions.

Those privy to this secret have followed suit, demanding that same transformation for weddings and other special occasions. Such is the power of makeup and the professed difference it makes.

We're only too proud to say the Philippines' first-ever freelance makeup artist organization held its premiere exhibit this holiday season. The Mixkup Krazy, composed of professional makeup artists and freelance artists alike, first produced a showcase of amazing photographic and fabulous makeup to an effort to promote local talent in the field.

Led by Lionel Bautista (president) and Arthur Palacios (chairperson), the organization effort coincide ceremony of professional makeup services ranging from bridal to concert-ed work.

Those two standout photos from their recent exhibit are just a sample of their amazing abilities. Do members explain the concepts and process a piece of their vision.

LIFESTYLE Fashion Beauty

Anna Bayle pays tribute to YSL in Vogue dinner

ANNA BAYLE at Condé Nast's Vogue dinner in Beijing last week

THE VOGUE ICONS GALA dinner at the Park Hyatt Ballroom in Beijing last Dec. 6 was not only a gathering of the world's leading fashion tastemakers and cognoscenti, but also an occasion to pay tribute to the late great designer Yves Saint Laurent.

Filipino socialite Anna Bayle, billed in the Condé Nast program as the world's first Asian supermodel, was one of the select guests given the spotlight to eulogize Saint Laurent, who died last June at 71 after four decades of shaping contemporary fashion.

Bayle, one of Saint Laurent's signature models, talked about her experiences in the Saint Laurent atelier and the most important lesson she learned from the "King of Fashion"—that an item must not just be unique or a look, but a spirit, a force and an energy that should be a positive difference in people's lives.

British supermodel Kate Moss was also given an award, while actress-model Milla Jovovich sang two songs to cap the glittery night.

ZOO Aluminum

Timely dots

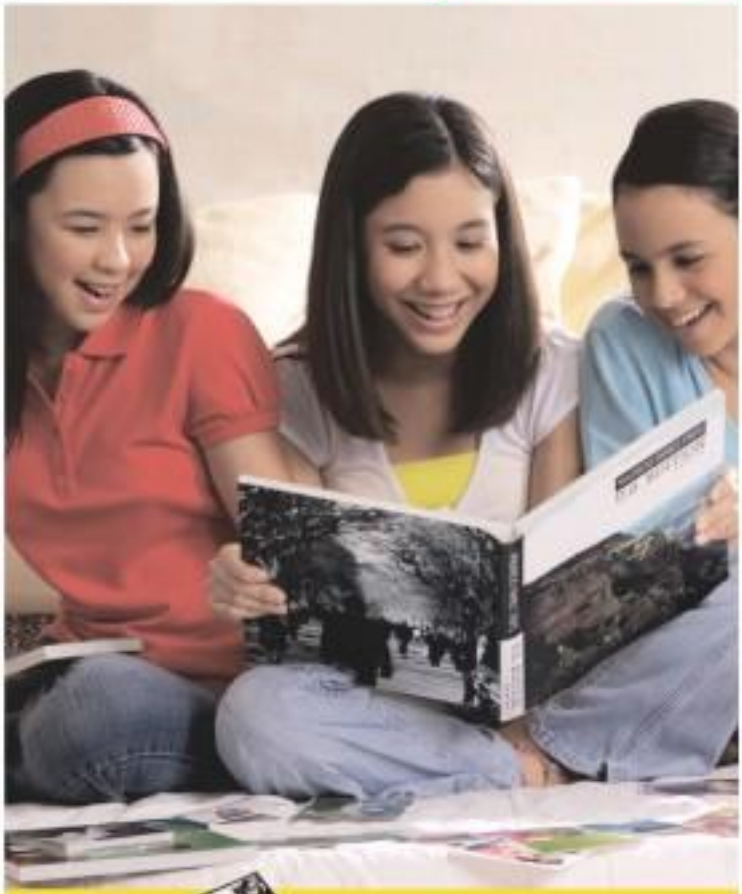
BEFORE, THERE WERE ONLY two ways to tell time. Either you go analog and take the big hand-little hand approach, or go digital and tell time with big numbers. And that was it for quite a while.

And then in 1997, in a London hotel, Matthew Waldman sketched designs for what would eventually be known as the Nooka watch. With dots and lines to represent time, it was definitely something different—and soon people wanted to notice.

It was only a matter of time before some of the biggest names in music (Chris Brown, among others) were spotted wearing this hot new timepiece.

Nooka is available at Rufio! Jewellery (Shangri-La Plaza Mall), My Temple (SM North EDSA and Robinson's Place Manila) and My Diamond (Glorietta 4 and Greenway). Call 6362098 or 6873572loc. 107.

NOOKA Zoni



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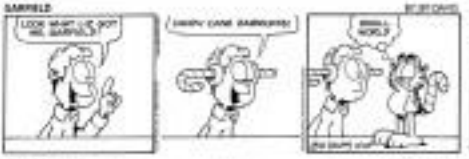
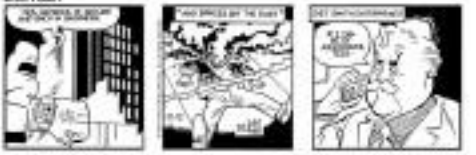
GARFIELD



A LIFTIN

PIGGIE AND HABBY

DICK TRACY



LOVEANDGETS

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Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

						8		
	4			1		3	2	
6	3			7				
			1		5			
	8	1				4	7	
			9		7			
				6			4	5
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Answer to previous puzzle

5	1	7	6	2	4	3	9	8
9	3	8	5	1	7	6	2	4
2	6	4	8	9	3	7	1	5
8	5	9	7	6	1	4	3	2
1	7	3	2	4	8	9	5	6
6	4	2	9	3	5	8	7	1
3	2	1	4	5	9	1	8	7
7	8	6	1	7	2	5	4	3
4	9	5	3	8	6	2	6	9

MARQUEZ family. Lawyer Juan Miguel Vazquez with Rosanna, Jose and Judy Duaniel Vazquez

DR. DANIEL Vazquez, Terry Madrigal and Ramon Sy

LOVI Vy Valera, Laurent Hebert and Vivi Cayuergos

VINE Mountebank of the Knob Group, lawyer Andy Bautista and sons Abram, Maximo and Xavier Bautista

MADELAINE Lim and Tagaig's First Lady Kara Tingo

BELA Vazquez and Claudy Tanson

ALEX Gaborro and Angie Rodriguez

YESSA Prieto Valdez and businessman Richard Tio

Rowdy cheers for sexy legs and stockings

From page B4

senior marketing manager of Sino Panasonic Audrey Tanco, Mich Mello, Irene Yy, Katrina Yu, Lia Golapco, and gorgeous Miriam Quiambao and Ivon Llibis.

Check out Ester's Leg Love at all SM Department stores and at Ester Torrellas's boutique in Makati.

Samsung race

The Manila Peninsula's Conservatory was buzzing with excitement when Samsung issued flare spread with game managers, good-looking Vince Hizon, incredibly shy tomboy.

The night teams were composed of four members: a celebrity, a member of the press, a Samsung dealer and a Samsung marshall. They had to race through eight pit stops while testing the features of the mobile phone, palangpas.

Clues were sent to their via Bluetooth to clue they could complete their task correctly in every destination. The race took them around Metro Manila, Makati and The Fort.

They used the Samsung InnoV8's Navitime GPS, taking panoramic shots and videos in the process. The last stop was at Blue Leaf Events Pavillion, McKinley Hill, where they had to frame their shots.

Team Mosaic won. Each member bagged a cool new Samsung InnoV8 mobile phone, no less, dahlings.

The following night Samsung InnoV8 made its grand debut at the Blue Leaf Events Pavillion. Welcoming the testers were Samsung vice president for marketing Charles Chen and silver top executives. The tireless partied till way past midnight.

I asked one of the team runners-ups later, "How do you communicate while dashing from one place to the other?"

He replied: "My trick is wearing a pair of shoes a size smaller, so that the pain in my feet would become so strong that I put all my concentration to end the race the fastest way I could." He was laughing.

Visit ph.samsungmobile.com.

ANNIE Tanco and Maribel Ramos

AUDREY Tanco and Alex Reyes

RAY Cruz and Mona Caragay

SM executive Harley Sy and Arlene Reyes

"WE ARE the champions." Winning team Team Mosaic at Power Up Silver City: JR Isaac, Dusty Ojeleni, Lyn Tan and John Hall

ALFRED Chua, Samuel Yip, Samsung channel manager Mark Sargio, Joel Orcasitas, Jeffrey Lee

SAMSUNG vice president for marketing mobile division Charles Chen and Samsung head of mobile phones Fe Varilla welcome guests at Blue Leaf.

TERRY-ANN Casco Pelayo, Patricia Bermudez, Edwin Pobleto and Adrian Velasco

SAMSUNG product manager Reno Jacalero, channel manager Mark Sargio, marketing communications manager Tom Marquez, Samsung head of mobile phones Fe Varilla, general manager Jerry Lacson and marketing director Glen Ginoga

GERALDINE Tanco, Evan Chua, SM executive Bernie Ngo, Arsenio Tanco and wife Alice

GRACE Yu, Katrina Yu, MBMPI general manager Arthur Tanco Jr., Carol Mahusay and Lia Golapco

MBMPI general manager Arthur Tanco Jr., designer and Legi Lovers planner Kara Torrellas, MBMPI treasurer Caroline Yeung

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Rowdy cheers for sexy legs and stockings

FOR ITS FANTASTIC 10TH ANNIVERSARY, world-class Franck Provost Manila unveiled its latest tres chic salon, the eco-friendly designed Franck Provost Studio, at the Net Quad Building in Fort Bonifacio.

The new salon will specialize in color.

"Our Color Bar that we created here at the Studio is truly unique, catering to anyone in search of a great hairstyle, using color as a instrument," said Eric showroom Franck stylist **Leonard Robert**, who has been with FP for the last three years.

The launch was hosted by our favorite reality stopper, **Rosa Rosal-Veloso**, and it revealed by some other divas: **Franck Provost** himself, dahlings. He and his president and CEO **Herb Arabber**, jetted in from Paris.

The grand opening was hosted by yours truly and **Baby Cruz** and **Irene Vasquez**, who have held the franchise since 1998. The five women refurbished the over 300 invi-

tees.

There was real-live wire and chaos, music, as well as an accidental bodice ripple, caused by La Tosca, naturellement.

To the elaborate ribbon-snipping ceremony, ribbons were cleverly tied to the hair of models. But guests of honor included **Israel** the Musician, **Kaine Chua Tiongco**, the spouse of Tagaytay Mayor **Franklin Tiongco** and hairextensionist, **Jacques Dupuispatier** on a really rare night out, palengke.

One thing I can say: Lots of women still believe in hairdos and if you don't think so, just visit any Franck Provost Beauty Salon and you'll see that statistics come true.

FRANCE Provost, who jetted in from Paris, with Irene Vasquez, Baby Cruz and Franck Provost Group president and CEO Mark Arabber

Without batting an eyelash

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Allen Mae Magpoc using **FUJI** Photo Database

SHAMBHALA Makati Level Elite Shaqri-La Hotel GM Boss Hauser and Christopher Chia

CRUZ Inside: Tisha Cruz Bautista and Baby Cruz

SAWZY Poblador

L'OREAL Phil. managing director Luc Olivier Marquet with Tessa Dragonwagon's Dress Shop SM Bicol fashion

Cheers to stockings

The Conservatory of Peninsula Manila Hotel was turned into a "Stiletto Rouge" inspired showcase of legs, legs and more legs of multi-talented actress turned chanteuse **Kate Torralba** held a fashion show to launch her collection for Grip Lady Stockings, dahlings.

The magic was set up in such a way that only the sexy legs of the models were showing, they wore Torralba's Leg Love line.

The sight of legs of course elicited loud cheers and applause from the full-house crowd, pahanggan.

"I've had this love affair with stockings for the longest time, Maurice," Kate told me. "This figure of mine might be petite but stockings really does add that oomph that matches my larger-than-life style."

Knowing ICT's date for the award-guide, I checked out the Leg Love line, which is hot and thirty. It is sexy RT.

As my eagle eye passed the venue, I thought to myself, by the gosh: every woman's gay must and must-be has clothes, as now we have Kate's thigh-hi stockings that will go well with the classy up or down-down legger crowd, di baleh!

Aside from the hottest executives of Manila Bay Hendry Milk, in the audience

BOMBS 81

SAMSUNG

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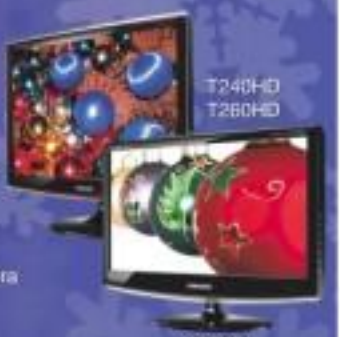

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LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

IT'S A WHITE Christmas for the Kaufmans with Eddie Weiss (right). Ore Zarnik wears slipper-front jacket with a white tunic slit-t, black denim jeans and leather belt, all from A/X Armani Exchange. Ore Mai Grecia strip dress and gold mini-rhinestone pump are from Jessica, all from Jessica

LACE It is major trend this season. Lace dress from Jessica, slingback pump leather shoes from Bora

Textured stockings, plum-colored tights are back

RENOWNED FASHION brands Ecco, Jessica and A/X usher in their holiday collections.

The three brands complement the dynamic lifestyles of stylish couple Mai and David Kaufman and combined tended and sexiness. Angel Aquino

Being the brains behind the modern vintage shop Bamia, ex Kaufman-Aranbee Bebe Modern boutiques, the Kaufmans make their boutique a reflection of their sense of style.

"Christmas comes but once a year, so we try to make the most of it and celebrate in style. We dress warmly and layered when abroad, and lightly but more brightly and glamorous when in town," Mai says. Think textured and plum-colored stockings.

Meanwhile, with TV shows like "F" and "Go Girls", Aquino has has become a style icon. Seen in her simplest of outfits, like a plain white tube dress with flip flops, she stands out.

Basic pieces are always good to work on, just add the correct accents, says Aquino. Vivid and solid colors are in her palette for the Christmas season.

This season, Jessica has ensembles with elegant touches, luxurious fabrications, and couture applications. Adding glamour to outerwear with delightful fur accents, Jessica takes designer luxury to a higher level.

Neon shoes are supple leather, flexible and light.

A/X holiday line blends elegance and modern glamour.

Selections include vintage-style collegiate jackets, slim pants, cardigan sweaters and tailored outerwear.

Jessica, A/X and Ecco are exclusively distributed by Secora Specialties Inc. Jessica is located at Rustan's Makati, Shangri-La Plaza Mall and The Podium. It will open soon in Eastwood Mall. A/X is at Cuore De Leo Pelmac Alabang Town Center, The Power Plant Mall, Glorietta 4, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Ecco is in all leading department stores nationwide.

PUNCTUATE your holiday look with opaque tights in shades of berry. Silver-gray dress and shoes from Jessica. Striped polo, black denim jeans and leather belt, all from A/X Armani Exchange, and shoes from Ecco

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Camiso Filipino updated in Amorsolo tribute

BENCH CELEBRATES PINOY PRIDE IN ITS designs, campaigns and projects. This time, Bench pays tribute to the genius of National Artist Fernando Amorsolo.

Going on in the Amorsolo retrospective exhibit, "His Art, Our Heart," in seven museums is runway in September, in multiple venues and will run till April 2009.

"His Art, Our Heart" was launched at the UP Vargas Museum with the theme "Inamorsolo, His Contemporaries and Pictures of Men Capturing Inspiration." It ran until Nov. 14. The second exhibit on at Ayala Museum, "Till Tide: The Artist as Storyteller, Amorsolo as Co-Author," shows till April 4, 2009; The National Museum's, "Master Copy," open till Jan. 11, 2009; the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, "Philippine Staple: The Land, The Harvest and the Masses" shows till Jan 13, 2009; the Yuchengco Museum with "Maldong Estoy: Portraits by Fernando Amorsolo," shows from Oct. 1, 2008 to Jan. 17, 2009; the GSIS Museum with "Mistah and Amorsolo," Oct. 2, 2008 to Dec. 20, 2008. To culminate, the Ayala Museum with "Amorsolo's Maidens Concealed and Revealed" is going on until March 6, 2009.

The Amorsolo Retrospective will also host eight CROBS Foundations, the participating museums and the Fernando C. Amorsolo Art Foundation Inc.

To mark this retrospective, Bench unveils Camiso Filipino that modernizes Pinoy local wear: the camiso de chino, a timeless staple in Filipino fashion, usually worn with tan vests formal wear, the Barong Tagalog.

With Bench's models Barbara Dee and Carla Estevanez, the latest Bench campaign shows the modernized camiso de chino in the collection aptly called Camiso Filipino—updated with a splash of colors like punchy yellows and more timeless and subdued gray. The easy and straightforward designs and cuts make the pieces in the collection donot classics pieces you can mix-mix and match with your other wardrobe items and, most importantly pieces you can wear forever.

To see more of Bench's latest collection, visit Bench boutiques in SM Mall of Asia, Glorietta, Trinoma, Robinsons Place Manila, Gateway Mall Cubao, SM Megamall, Robinsons Galleria, Alabang Town Center, Bonifacio Global City, Filinvest Alabang, SM North Edsa and SM Clarkfield Pampanga.

CAMISO Shown is a Bench Camiso Filipino

BINCHONG Bench looks dashing in gray Camiso Filipino by Bench

Bench Body' boutiques in SM Megamall, Glorietta, Alabang Town Center, Robinsons Brixton, Robinsons Galleria, SM Centerpoint, SM Pampanga, SM Manila, SM Fairview SM North Edsa The Block and Superbench outlet in Market Market.

For details on the Amorsolo Retrospective, call 416 6601 or e-mail info@amorsolo.com.ph. You may also log on to www.amorsolo.com.

Charming statement tees

"WHATEVER" shirts with elegance, retro graphics, vintage ads, drawing and charming characters

WHATEVER! IS A T-SHIRT LINE exclusively distributed by Robinsons Department Store.

It offers graphic tees made for those who love to express themselves with fun and funky sayings or artworks in stylish ways.

These are coloured baby doll tees in hot pink and other bright colors, which prints like "Cursed Juvenile" or "Single and Fabulous."

Young girls will enjoy striped bandeau tops, pastel-colored pieces that say "Cute" or have trending designs, retro graphics, vintage ads, delightful drawings and charming characters embellished on the front.

Whatever! also carries sleepwear for women or tween-ers—edgy shirts and shorts ensembles that give the ultimate casual-comfy fit.

The designs feature a wide array of cute, fairy and Hollywood fiends and animal toos like elephants, owls, birds, cats and dogs—all with adorable, funny quotes.

Enjoy bedtime with cool shirts and boxy straight pajamas electric-green with multicolored designs—a squeeze! Sisters (but not "Sister Fiends"), for instance, or a sweetcouple with a "Love at first bite."

From vintage and pop shirts to hip sleepwear, Whatever! has them in colors, colors, more and themes that are unwinning, humorous and witty.

Play with words and wear them proudly. They are great as thinking outfits, too!

Robinsons Department Store has branches in Robinsons Malls, Robinsons Metro Malls, Shopwalk and Festival Mall in Alabang, Limketkai Mall in CDO and Robinsons Cabanatuan.

Visit www.robinsonsdepartmentstore.com.ph.

"WHATEVER" designs

Leslie Mobo bares all in fashion homecoming

DIMGDONG Bardo looks dashing in Mobo for Bench boxers

LESLIE MOBO HAS BECOME A HOTEL name in the London fashion scene since he graduated from the prestigious Central St. Martin's in 2002 with a First Class B.A. Honors Degree in fashion, he received the Cedar Runers Award for Fashion Illustration, a nomination in the Chartered Society of Designer Fashion Awards held in the British Natural History Museum. He also participated in the "Fashion in Motion" exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was even featured in BBC News.

His name, now up in bright lights of Harrod's, Adam Jones Mobo is one of the hottest and youngest designers to make waves in the fashion world. Even though he was in demand as a designer right after his graduation, Mobo furthered his education by taking up a Master's Degree in Fashion at St. Martin's, winning the Estelle Picci award in Florence and the coveted ITS (Steel Award at the International Talent Support) in Trieste for his M.A. collection entitled "Cheesy in the Nordic Pole" as discovered in the As WOM-US London Fashion Week.

And now, the homegrown talent is sharing his gifts and expertise for the first time with his countrymen. Mobo has teamed up with powerhouse brand Bench Body to create a series of lingerie pieces known as Mobo for Bench.

The collaboration first made its appearance to the mid-year staging of Bench's bi-annual denim and underwear show entitled Bodycat. To the delight of the collaborators, the collection achieved a very positive response, so enthusiastic that people trooped to the stores looking for the collection the following day!

The long wait is finally over as the Mobo for Bench is now available in all Bench Body stores and selected Bench, Metrowalk, and Superbench stores nationwide.

For more information on the Mobo for Bench line, visit the Bench website at www.bench.com.

THE DESIGNER looking pensive and second backstage during the underwear show; at right, Angelica Pangandaman looks and panties with mesh accents

ALTHEA JASPEAD bandeau and bikini

ANGELICA Pangandaman in a Mobo for Bench black bra number

PRISCILLA Montilla looking every bit the luxury queenie Mobo for Bench bra and panty set

12 foxy picks

JOHN Pran wearing a denim jacket

KRISTA Rustic-looking colorblock-effect Fur denim jacket with red batwing details and inner printing

TWELVE FASHION-FORWARD celebrities take their pick from Bell-Winter collection of Fur, the Israeli fashion brand.

Taking inspiration from the rich and eclectic cultures around the world, the creators "fuse spirited casual wear."

The women were ecstatic about the darling fabrics that range from classic to sporty, for-or-school, and-simple-to-sexy.

Fur Mia stretches its feisty line of preppy sporty, rocker and clean clothes in experimental fabrics with a daring color palette and a mix of irregular shapes and fits for jeans.

For it or Grumbelt S. Robinson's Place Manila, and SM City Cebu.

A GREEN print all-over roundneck shirt

CHRISTIAN Bautista with a white geometric print all-over French Terry jacket

A DARK purple striped long sleeved shirt with halter ribbon

BRENT Javier's choice, a navy woven jacket

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Once again, it's the season for Christmas baskets and wines from SM. These holiday packages are perfect gifts for business partners, clients, and colleagues.

SM Christmas baskets are packed with all the goodies for a great Pinoy Noche Buena. The baskets are filled with holiday delights such as ham, fruit cocktails, pasta and sauces, among others.

You can choose from 13 varieties of SM Christmas baskets that will fit your Christmas budget. To reach these baskets are five (5) wine packages specially selected for you. These baskets and wine packages are beautifully wrapped to add color to this festive season.

Let SM Supermarket take care of your Christmas shopping! Check out the SM Supermarket Christmas baskets and wines at your nearest SM Supermarket, Savemore Market, and SM Hypermarket stores.

SM Supermarket is the largest supermarket chain in the country, with over 35 SM Supermarket and Savemore Market stores nationwide.

For more information, you may call our customer service hotline: SM Supermarket and Savemore Market at (02)811-1888 local 3936 and SM Hypermarket at (02)631-1888 local 5754.

Be fab sans the frills

SURVIVING THE FASHION cruise and coming out fabulous on a shoestring budget is not at all difficult. Here are some suggestions on how to look stylish this Christmas season.

1. What's hot is not always what's you. Choose clothes that you feel good wearing; it will isn't out fashionable because you have the inner sense of satisfaction in how you look. Nobody knows you better than yourself, thus nobody can dictate your style but yourselves.

2. Style and function should always go together. If you are donning long sleeves, cool and boots on a rainy morning only for the sun to shine later on, you're in for a fashion disaster. Always consider that the weathers can be erratic, so put on clothes you can wear even when the temperature changes in an instant.

3. Keep the basics, then mix and match. Skirts, floral long and sheer sleeves, tank tops, denims, denim and pants in black, white and light-colored hues that fit you well never go out of style. Plus, you can mix and match them with the colors of the season. However, don't elevate yourself in too many colors on one outfit. Have one particular bright tone, which doesn't make you stand out rather than look like a fashion victim.

4. Accessories. The key to looking good on simple outfits is by pulling on accessories to season. Wear pieces that flatter your features and add elegance to your look. When choosing accessories, the general rule is that it should highlight your individuality, be unique, but don't overdo it.

5. Scour your wardrobe. You never know what treasures can be hiding in your closet. Find time to wade through your collection and assess which one might work for a particular season. If necessary (or if you have the patience for it), make alterations so you can make the pieces fashionable again. Otherwise, give it away, exchange or better still them to you can buy new ones.

6. Shop wisely. If you really can't help swiping away for the latest clothes, the wearing rule is smart shopping. Distinguish your needs from your whims. Consider if you can still wear the item after the season is over, don't get over-excited at the gamut of choices around you. Go to shops that offer stylish and affordable items that can be worn all year round, and always look for good bargains like Get Load. Invest in clothes that are worth your bucks.

Get Load offers a wide array of choices for the fashionable, yet budget-conscious Filipina.

Visit its branches at Market Market!, Alabang Town Center, Robinsons Metro East, MCGC Mall of Asia, Sta. Lucia East and SM Malls.

Editor Emerie G. Rebardo

ENTERTAINMENT

Brad Pitt on Shiloh's film debut

LOS ANGELES—THERE'S AN EXTRA REASON to watch Brad Pitt's brassy, slapstick film, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button."

Shiloh, the daughter of Brad and Angelina Jolie, makes her movie debut with a cameo appearance. Speaking to reporters last Saturday morning at the Wilshire Ebell, Ed in Burbank, Brad explained how Shiloh snagged a short scene from the Jodie Foster-directed film, which currently playing his daughter in "Benjamin Button."

"Before have their own schedule," he said. "Sometimes they're open and that's a 'Oh God my gosh, what's what's both twins who were in the film were crying and cute or something. There was going to 'oh' were sitting and waiting so we just set Shiloh in. She's in one of the little shots. I think they digitally changed the color of her hair."

Last Monday evening, at a private cocktail party in Century City following the premiere of "Benjamin Button," Angelina Jolie's eyes sparkled when we mentioned Shiloh's brief debut.

Her couldn't have decided on a more significant movie for Shiloh to debut in. "Benjamin Button" will rank as one of her dad's best films. The movie, directed by David Fincher ("Se7en," "Fight Club," "The Panic Room") and written by Eric Roth, was based on F. Scott

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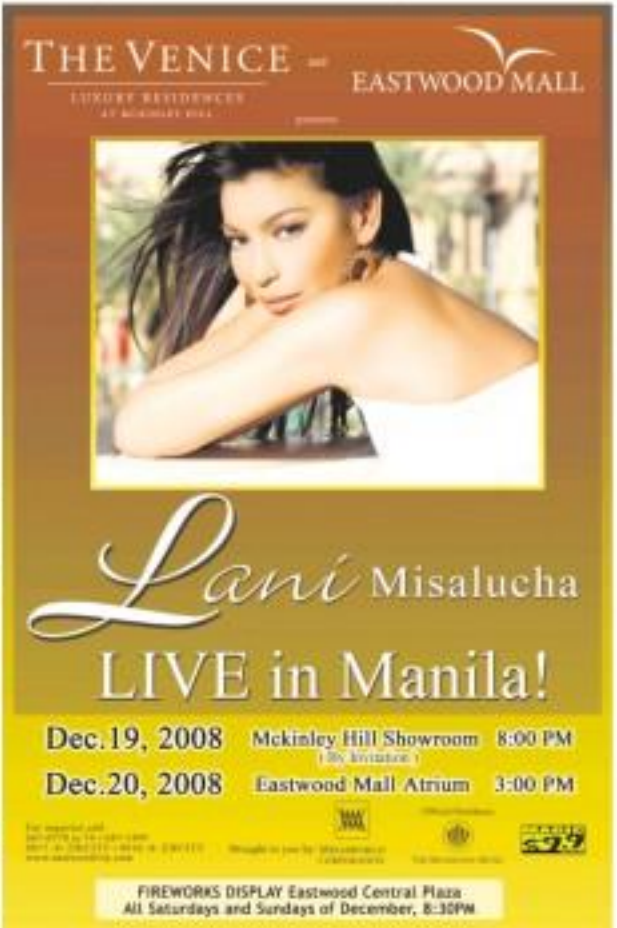

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GALLERIA

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 IndieSine: TANGGAW
4 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
5 QUARANTINE
6 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
7 PRIDE AND GLORY / FOUR CHRISTMASES
8 LOVE BIRDS
9 100
10 BOLT / JAMES BOND: QUANTUM OF SOLACE

ERMITA

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
3 TWILIGHT
4 QUARANTINE / BOLT
5 FOUR CHRISTMASES
6 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
7 PRIDE AND GLORY / TWILIGHT
8 100
9 LOVEBIRDS

METRO EAST

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
4 PRIDE AND GLORY
5 FOUR CHRISTMASES
6 QUARANTINE
7 BOLT
8 SCAREGIVERS

NOVALICHES

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
4 WALANG KAWALA

PIONEER

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 FOUR CHRISTMASES
4 PRIDE AND GLORY

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STA. ROSA

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 LIVING HELL
4 SCAREGIVERS

LIPA

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 QUARANTINE
4 BURIED ALIVE

BASMARINAS

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 SCAREGIVERS
4 MONSTER SLAYER

IMUS

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 SCAREGIVERS
4 SEX DRIVE

ANGELES

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 MONSTER SLAYER
4 MAKE IT HAPPEN

STARMILLS

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 ONE TRUE LOVE
4 SCAREGIVERS
5 MONSTER SLAYER
6 QUARANTINE

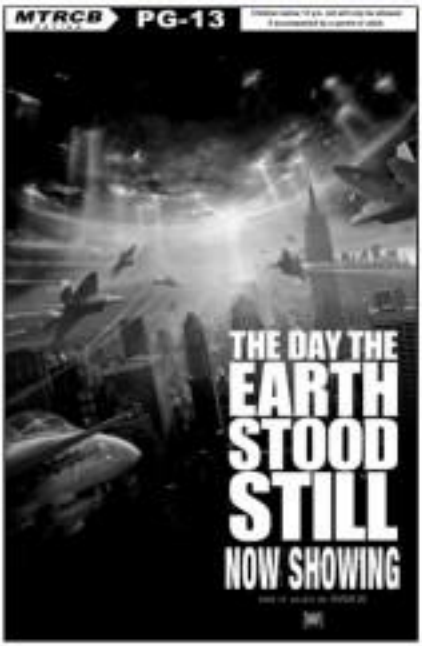
BACOLOD

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
4 SEX DRIVE
5 BURN AFTER READING
6 CITY of EMBER

ILOILO

1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
2 TWILIGHT
3 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
4 MONSTER SLAYER
5 STRANGERS
6 TROPIC THUNDER

AT A BRAD's side character gets younger in the film, Cate Blanchett's Daisy grows older.



ENTERTAI

Brad Pitt

Pure honesty

Waste no time

Bread of sis

Gold ring band

NMENT

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3) FOUR CHRISTMASES PG-13
2:35, 4:50, 7:05, 9:20
4) THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL PG-13
1:45, 4:10, 6:35, 9:00
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WISH LIST

SUNSHINE CRUZ-MONTANO

"My wish is for more movies. I also wish that more talented actors and directors be given big breaks like casting you. Sobrang saya ng buhay ko ngayon at kasal ang mga pinakita. Si Mariel ang isa sa talagang nagpapatibay."

Married Cruz

DECEMBER Ariel Cardoso decorates the Belo home every Christmas.

Rust & gold Christmas

HOME BODY

For celebrity cosmetic surgeon Vicki Belo/ Page K2

"I WANT to have the feel of an Asian resort in the house," says Vicki above.

ONLY her daughter Cryscelle's bedroom on the second floor has no adjoining terrace.

Her holiday decor is set up as early as November. Gifts for friends are prepared in advance, too

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Rust & gold Christmas

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Datoc Francisco

RUST AND GOLD ARE THE colors of Christmas in the Melo home this year.

For three consecutive years, since they moved to to the 1,000-square-meter property in a posh Makati village, Ike Melo have relied on designer Ariel Ecatrom for their holiday decorations.

"In the beginning, I had requests. I once chose violet for the color scheme because it's my favorite color—ang panglit. After that, I decided to just listen to her," celebrity

PUTTING the finishing touches on 8-foot-tall Christmas tree at the living room.

to cosmetic surgeon Hicks Melo told Living Inquirer. "Ariel doesn't charge everything every year. She incorporates materials previously used."

Melo said the decorations are set up in early as November. Chairman gifts are prepared ahead of time, too. "We used to give friends home-baked cookies—we have three bedroom recipes. But a busy diet expert advised against that. This year, I'm giving fruit salad," she said.

Apart from the 8-foot-tall Christmas tree in the living room, a smaller one—in black and white—stands next to the main door. "It's a Dolce & Gabbana tree," said Melo, "but my mom doesn't like it."

Meanwhile, all over the house are prized art pieces by, among others, Malang, Botocle, Arlene Isa And Anlo Magsaysay-Ho. "At first, I was very much into Malang—big hands and big heads, diddito. Then I went to modern themes—brown Lee, very minimalist. Now I'm into Botocle. I adore his painting of two boats, which I've hung near my

VICKY'S favorite art piece by Botocle

PAINTING by Malang

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 TWILIGHT	2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	3 QUARANTINE	4 PRIDE & GLORY			
GLORIETTA 4	1 TWILIGHT	2 QUARANTINE	3 27 DRESSES				
GREENBELT 1	4 HSM	5 BOOGIEWOOGIE	6 TWILIGHT	7 FOUR CHRISTMASES			
GREENBELT 3	1 TWILIGHT	2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL					
	1 TWILIGHT	2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL					
	3 PRIDE & GLORY	4 FOUR CHRISTMASES	5 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL				
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL					
	3 TWILIGHT	4 QUARANTINE	5 FOUR CHRISTMASES				
AYALA CENTER CINEMAS	1 [illegible]	2 TWILIGHT	3 QUARANTINE	4 LIVING WILL			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	2 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL					
	3 TWILIGHT	4 QUARANTINE	5 SCREECHER				
TRINOMA	1 FOUR CHRISTMASES	2 QUARANTINE	3 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	4 TWILIGHT			
	5 SAW V	6 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	7 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL				

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — "FILIPINO EVENINGS AT GLORIETTA 4 — Celebrate the joy of Christmas as world class ensembles serenade you with carols all month — December 6, 13, 20 & 27, 6:00pm, Glorietta 4 Park"

Greenbelt — "DESIGNER FRESH CHRISTMAS TREE DISPLAY — December 15-27, The Gallery, Greenbelt 5"

Alabang Town Center — "ACOUSTIC RHYTHMS CONCERT SERIES — With Sitti (Dec 11) & Jay Durias (Dec 18) — December 4, 11 & 18, 6PM, Cuore de las Palmas"

Ayala Center Cinemas — "THE CHAMBER CHOIR — December 16, The Terraces"

Market! Market! — "THE BLOOMFIELDS Christmas Album arrives here! — December 16, 6PM, Activity Center"

Onesteglia — "Repertory Philippines presents A CHRISTMAS CAROL The Musical — December 14 to December 21, 2008 — For details, call 8870000 or log on to www.repertoryphilippines.com"

Ayala Museum — "FROM INSPIRATION TO ILLUSION: The Scenographic Works of Eduardo Quintero — Ongoing until 11 January 2009 at Ayala Museum Gallery — For details, call at 7577777 or 24 hour SMS or visit www.ayalamuseum.org"

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CRYSTALLE'S bedroom has a view of the garden. The pen on the record base (R) is equipped for pole dancing.

The Dolce and Gabbana Christmas tree

daughter's room," she said. "I used to like sculptures more than paintings. But they're impressionist and expressive."

The two-story mansion was designed by Francis Antonio. Vicki said her daughter Crystalle went with Antonio to "Bali land and Cambodia to buy a lot of the accents and fabrics for the house. The idea for the curtains and upholstery ran from the Thai silk retailer Jim Thompson.

"The look of the house is modern Asian. Dominant colors are maroon, red and brown. The floor is tiled in white," explained Grysolle. "It's like a doll house. When you shoot it on a certain angle, you can say where everyone is and what lights are on."

Vicki added: "I wanted a vacation house in the city. I wanted the feeling of an Ayala resort. This is also why the furniture pieces are kind of low—so people can sit cross-legged. I remember my kids had the most beautiful Eastern bed the world never threw away with fabric or plastic and nobody could sit on them. I vowed I would never forget it in my house."

Vicki said it's a good sign that she hasn't gotten bored with the house. "The weightgainer is always busy. Edna toddle is bad. When I'm home, I can breathe," she said.

Grysolle said Antonio is also their landscape artist. "She's known for pocket gardens, which sort of brings nature into the house—mainly what my mom needs."

Vicki said it's unusual to see her, Grysolle and her son, Quark, holding business meetings here. "We have a cook and a lot of house help (10 maids, four drivers) for that purpose," she pointed out. "My kids and I are all very busy. I encourage them to hold their meetings here because it makes me feel safe and secure to know that they're just around. They can also bring friends and hold parties here anytime."

The doctor said her favorite part of the house is Grysolle's sleeping area, the smallest of four rooms on the second floor, also has a modern-Asian theme. It has a veranda that looks over many and is quaint.

"Quark's room reflects his personality. Since it's like a hotel room," said Vicki. "I keep trying to improve my bed. I want a bed that lasts me. My favorite is the one I've slept in at the Peninsula Hotel in Beverly Hills. I bought similar sheets and

GARDEN GAZING. "It's kind of beautiful during and open spaces," says the doctor.

house wears a modern-Asian look. Maroon, red and ...ware the dominant colors.

...'STALLE'S bedroom is always made up," says Vicki.

...d maroon is used to color receiving area.

...ANTHING is to speak to you," says Vicki.

VICKI says she admires the "childlike" drawings in this Malang piece.

FROM a certain angle, Crystalle says, one could see who is in rooms A, and which lights are on.

BUDDHA image in room, bought in Bali.

Rust & gold Christmas

From page B1

madonna para sila sa sto mahaba ang hair. I talked to the Balinese people and they said I could order a bed from them. My new gift to myself would probably be that. And I saved a special somewhere but it's a crazy price for a bed."

Vicki pointed out that the house "is really for the kids." "The land was bought by her ex-husband (Quark and Cristalle's father), businessman Anas Romares. Vicki built the house. "We will give it to the kids," she said. "I still want my own house. I want to have a big mansion because I'm scared of scuba diving but love to watch the fish. I want the aquarium to be gigantic — willing to dive — and full of soft scuba fish. But that would cost a lot. A friend of mine had one built for $20,000 10 years ago. I wonder how much it would cost me today."

Email vmoran@inquirer.com.ph

VICKI says the house will ultimately belong to daughters Crystalle and son Quark.

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